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#SHOPSPRINGBEAUTY
PAGE 61
THE SUPERNATURAL
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"MY BIGGEST FEAR WAS THAT I WAS TOO ORDINARY"
CAREER MOVES
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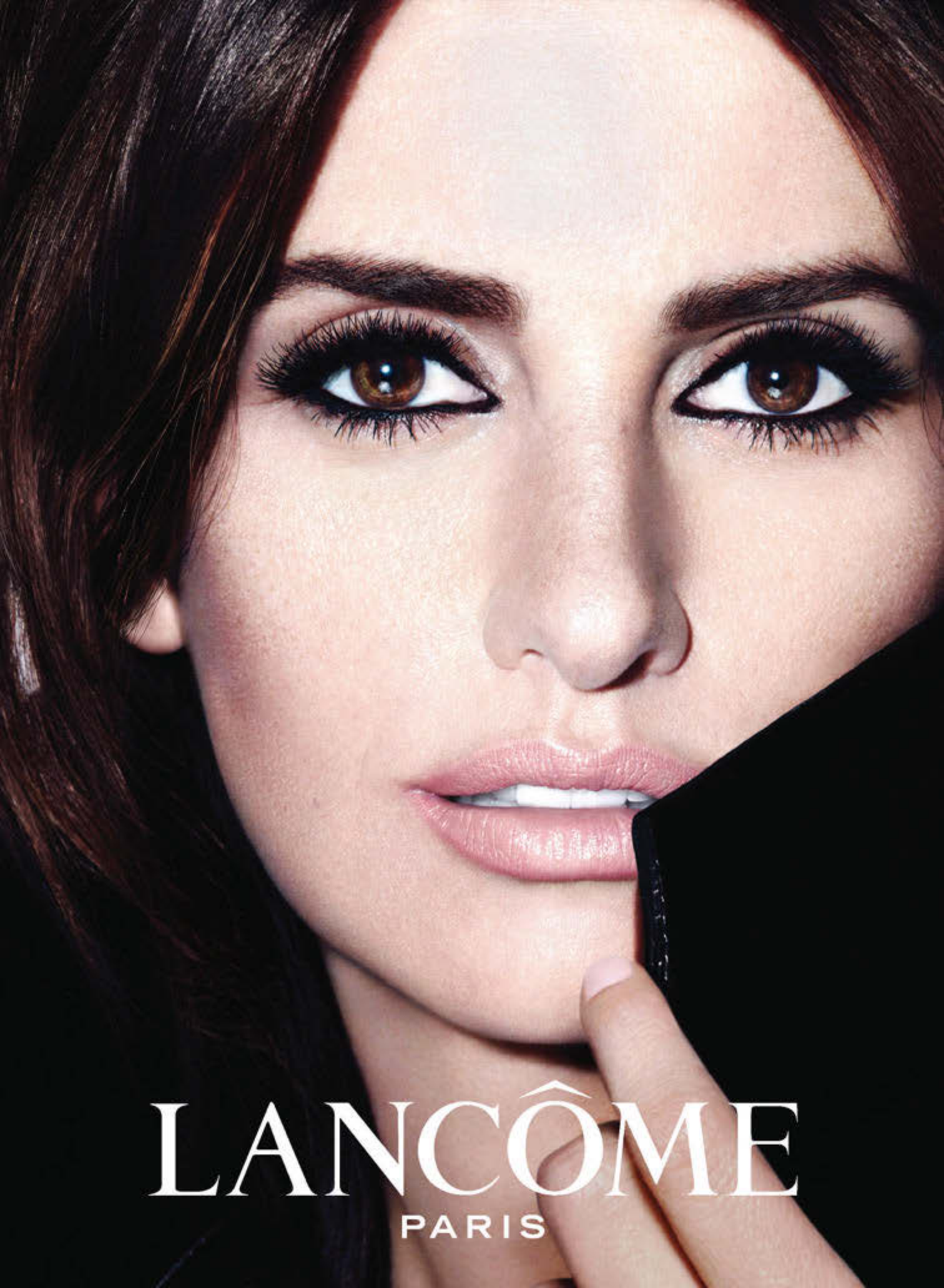
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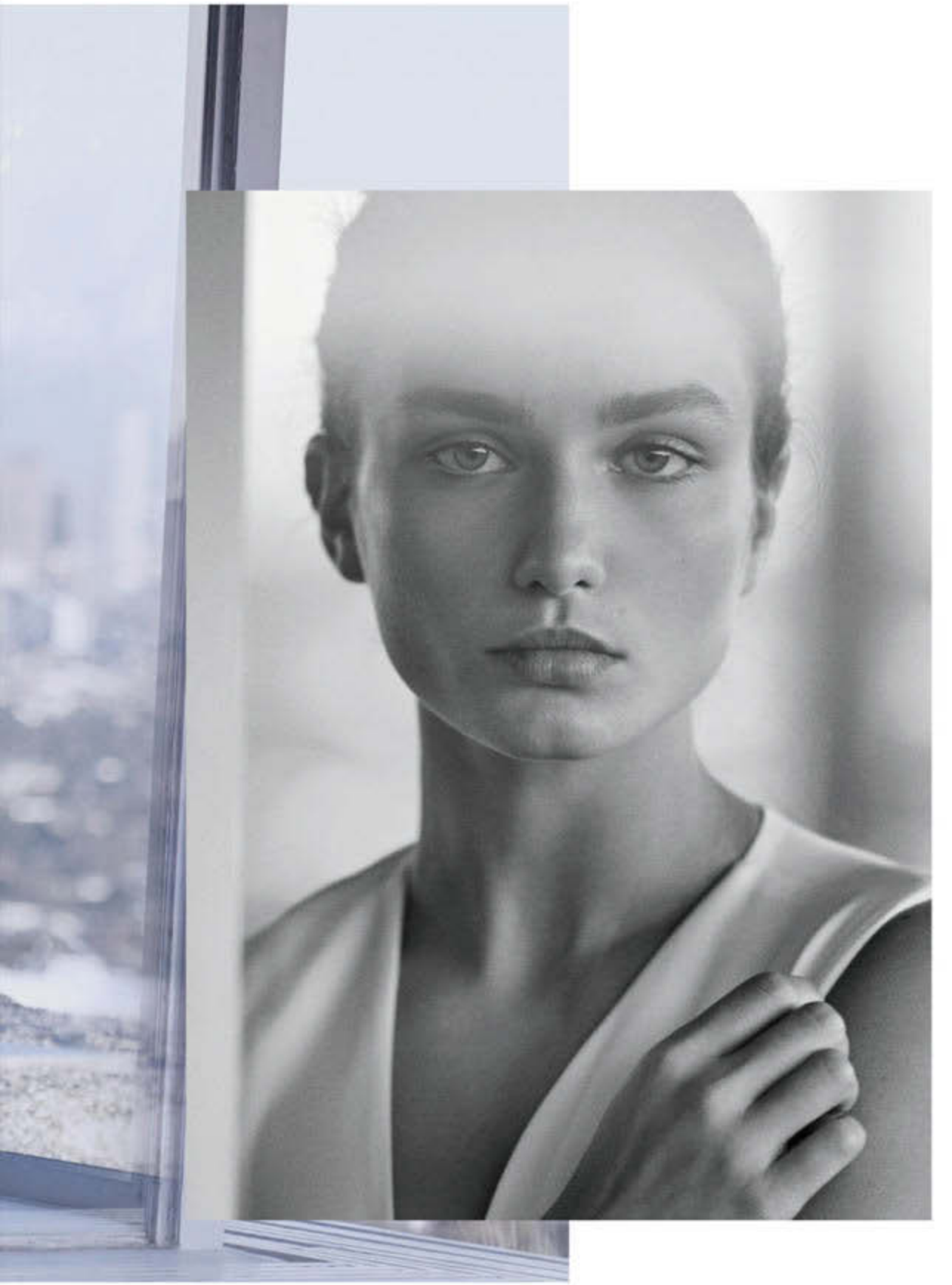
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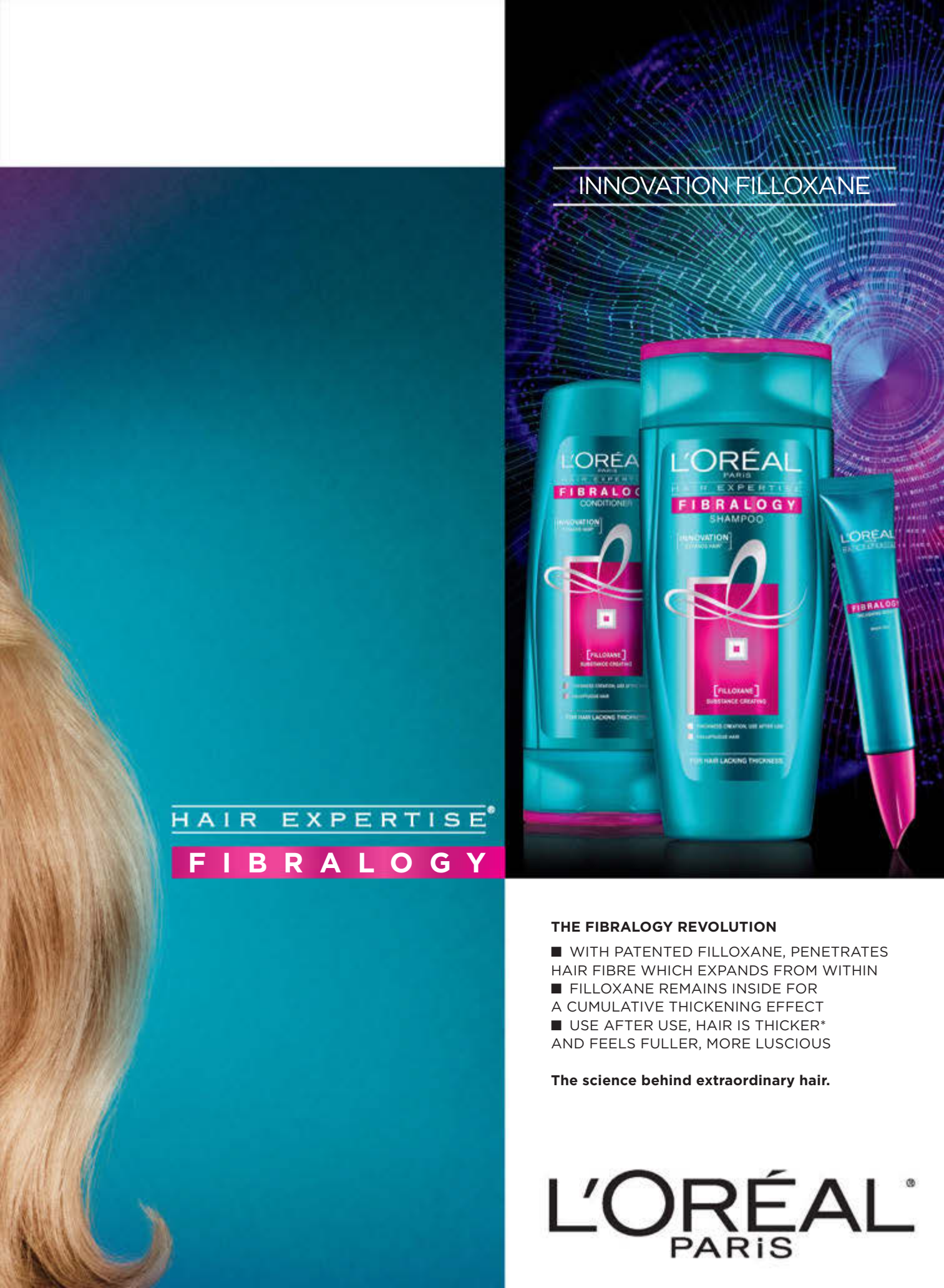
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THE ROAD LESS TRAVELLED

Managing editor Christina braved a rainstorm to see Angkor Wat in Cambodia (page 174).



FASHION FATIGUES

Designers celebrated all things utilitarian this season—so did we. See page 132 for our military-inspired shoot.



BEST IN SHOW

We toasted fashion editor-at-large Juliana (second from right) on her CAFA nomination for best stylist.



CANADIAN BEAUTY

Health & beauty editor Katherine ran into Grace Mahary backstage at the Victoria's Secret show (page 156).



ANTI-AGING ARSENAL

The beauty team dug deep into their stash for their fight against time's cruel march (page 150).



DIOR DARLING

National Diorshow artist Pascal Grand'Maison during our #ELLECanadaCloset x Dior collab (page 61).



VIVA LA FLATFORM!

Marni's geometric "flatforms" proved to be the perfect accompaniment to our kimono-filled shoot (page 122).



ART-HOUSE RULES

Canadian designer Sid Neigum deconstructs his obsession with modular origami for us (page 66).



SHE'S GOT THE MOVES

See these pomposms and skates in full swing with our fashion-in-motion shoot (page 44).

TEXT BY ALIYAH SHAMSHER; ALL PHOTOS BY ELLE CANADA STAFF

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CANADA ELLE

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LEDA & ST. JACQUES (MODEL); DANIEL HARRISON (SUNGLASSES)


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ON THE COVER

Phoebe Tonkin is wearing an embroidered tweed dress and leaf earrings by Chanel. **Photographer** Beau Grealy (mapltd.com) **Stylist** Romy Frydman (imgtalent.com) **Hair** Renya Xydis (artist-group.net) **Makeup** John McKay (defactoinc.com) **Nails** Nettie Davis (The Wall Group)

NELSON SIMONEAU (MODEL)



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editor's note



JUST BREATHE...

It's day two of a cold snap in Toronto, and I've not left the house. Literally. I put on my cozy sweats and favourite wool sweater and haven't moved. I've had two naps a day. In fact, I've just woken up from a late-afternoon siesta to pen this month's Editor's Note. I'm feeling very "Zen," which is the perfect mindset to introduce the meditative theme that wends its way through this issue. Although the '70s dominated the runways this season, there was another refreshing alternative to the fringed and flared-pants "fashionation." Designers such as Sarah Burton at Alexander McQueen and Consuelo Castiglioni at Marni, as well as 3.1 Phillip Lim and Aquilano.Rimondi, referenced Asian silhouettes and accessories that I'd describe as monkish, reflective and timeless. Think judo and obi belts and kimono shapes. If you'd like your mind to match your chilled fashion sense, there are several stories you'll want to read. Start with "Comfort in Chaos" (page 164) by Andy Puddicombe, who is a meditation enthusiast and the co-creator of the Headspace app, and then follow that up with #lifereboot columnist Stephanie Gilman's terrific piece on the Muse ("Slow Motion," page 168). This brain-sensing headband from Toronto-based tech company InteraXon is on my #want list. (The band, which measures electrical impulses in the brain, provides feedback in the form of different sounds, such as birds and windstorms, to help train you to calm your mind.) In "Head Games" (page 114), Guy Saddy—who is perhaps the last person in the world I'd expect to meditate—writes about his foray into mantra land to explore why meditation groups have replaced bars in terms of being the best way to network your way into the corner office. For those of you who prefer your meditation to take the form of walking instead of sitting on a pillow in a darkened room, you'll be inspired by Lara Koerner Yeo's trip to western Tibet to help film a documentary about the pilgrimage community around the sacred peak of Mount Kailash. In "Around and Around We Go" (page 184), Koerner Yeo observes how easily we're distracted by the constant struggle to achieve or complete everything that is expected of us. "It's not an environment where people notice or understand the power of eye contact or a smile—gestures that came so naturally to pilgrims at Mount Kailash," she writes. So don't wait until a -40°C wind chill forces you to take a quiet day (or two) to spend time with the people who make you smile.

Noreen

Noreen Flanagan
Editor-in-Chief
Follow me on Twitter and Instagram
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We love hearing from you! Please write to us at **editors@ELLECanada.com**.



ELLE CANADA

What could be more chill than shopping from your couch? If you're looking for spring-makeup inspo, check out our first-ever shoppable beauty videos. You can view them online at **ELLECanada.com/shopspringbeauty**, or use the free ***viewa*** app to watch them directly from the pages of the magazine (page 61).

EVAAN KHERAJ (N. FLANAGAN); HAIR & MAKEUP BY VANESSA JARMAN (P1M.CA); N. FLANAGAN IS WEARING A DRESS BY THAKOON ADDITION (AT HUDSON'S BAY, THEBAY.COM), A PENDANT BY IRADJ MOINI (AT ARCHIVES, ARCHIVESLTD.COM) AND A BRACELET AT TIFFANY & CO. (TIFFANY.CA)


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Questions? Comments?
Please write us at
editors@ELLECanada.com.

INTERNS
Anita Ehui, Heather Hood, Monika Markovinovic, Elissa Matsushita, Nezariel Scott, Rebecca Shapiro

CONTRIBUTORS
Barbara Balfour, Sara Bruneau, Holly Burton, Sara Cation, Justine Cullen, Romy Frydman, Stephanie Gilman, Beau Grealy, Michael-Oliver Harding, Evaan Kheraj, Lara Koerner Yeo, Leda & St. Jacques, Pasha Malla, Georgia Nicols, Geoffrey Ross, Guy Saddy, Sarah Treleaven, Arkan Zakharov

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guest list



NELSON SIMONEAU
Photographer

THE GIG Working between Paris and Montreal, Simoneau has shot for the likes of Jean Paul Gaultier, Fiat and Vidal Sassoon. He captured the military-inspired fashion in this month's "Ready for Action." **TOUGH JOB** "The most breathtaking locations I've photographed in are the Seychelles, Barbados, Jamaica, Tahiti and South Africa."



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ALIYAH SHAMSHER
Features Editor

THE GIG B.C. native Shamsher is the newest addition to the ELLE Canada family. Also the founder of online arts-and-culture publication Issue28, she describes joining the team as both "nerve-racking and blissful!" **MENTAL UTOPIA** "I used to reach my Zen with daily ocean swims and being able to see the Milky Way."

ANDY PUDDICOMBE
Co-creator of Headspace app

THE GIG Puddicombe, a former monk, spent 10 years learning to meditate. The L.A.-based Brit clears up common misconceptions in "Comfort in Chaos." **PEACEFUL PURSUIT** "Meditation isn't about clearing your mind; it's more about learning how to be comfortable with the mind no matter how distracted it is."





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ERIN MACDONALD
Model

THE GIG Ottawa-based MacDonald, who was scouted while attending university in Edmonton, sports some kimono-inspired looks for "Shape Shifter." **ASIAN FLAVOUR** "I think my favourite trip for work so far has been Tokyo. It's an incredible city—there is so much to do and see!"

MARYAM SIDDIQI
Writer

THE GIG In ELLE World, Torontonian Siddiqi writes about the Sameness Project, a Dubai-based social initiative that is creating connections between people from disparate walks of life. **INTREPID REPORTER** "Many people are working on interesting projects, but they're so busy they forget to talk about it. I'm glad I'm a conduit for them." □





page 190

TEXT BY ANITA EHUI, HEATHER HOOD & REBECCA SHAPIRO



A JOURNEY THROUGH TIME – WITH RIMOWA

The 1920s marked the beginning of modern air travel and the golden age of Hollywood. In 1919, Hugo Junkers presented the world's first all-metal commercial aircraft. It was made using the aircraft aluminum alloy discovered by Alfred Wilm in 1906. In 1950, RIMOWA presented its suitcase with the unmistakable grooved design made of the same material – at the time, it was the lightest suitcase in the world. RIMOWA was a real pioneer in the sector, starting the trend for lightweight luggage back then.



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THIS MONTH'S BEST

Just like a close friend, you always know what to tell me when I'm looking for direction. I've been following your brilliant advice for years. I curled up to read your article about long-distance love, "Miles Apart" [ELLE Relationship, February 2015], and I was reassured that it was not only possible but a good thing. Yes! Just what I needed to hear. In this rush-rush world we live in, sometimes we're forced to slow things down a little. I shall be patient, keep my long-distance sweetheart and, in between his visits, take the time to enjoy your fabulous magazine. Thank you so much! **VALERIE, SASKATOON**

ROMANCE REVIVAL

Long-distance love stories are not new, but there will always be a different perspective on them. "Miles Apart," by Robert Wiersema, has given me reasons why this kind of romance can work out no matter how far apart the two lovers are. I'm now more hopeful about the long-distance relationship I'm in because we're both doing what we can to make it last—we are making our own magic. **SHAYNE HONTIVEROS, MONTREAL**

MAKING CENTS

I enjoyed "The Great Divide" [ELLE Money, October 2014]. My husband and I have always shared bank accounts, and after 26 years I can't imagine it being any different. My co-worker and her husband keep their money separate, and it works for them most of the time, but I can see that it does cause some issues in their marriage. I will be passing along the article to them. Thanks for a great read! **ANN THRASHER, PLAINFIELD, ONT.**

YOUNG AT HEART



I'm 80 years old, and I have memories of the "brain orgasms" you talk about in "Sensory Overload" [ELLE Life, November 2014]. I grew up in wartime Scotland and vividly remember having "tickles" whenever I heard Vera Lynn's song "We'll Meet Again." This delicious feeling still washes over me when I listen to certain pieces of music. Also, unlike one of your readers [ELLE Letters, January 2015], I was delighted—and educated—by those colourful vibrators [ELLE Body, November 2014], as this was something new for me. I can go to any mall for fashion, but it's magazines like yours that teach me something new. **JULIE E. ANDERSON, BRANDON, MAN.**

FASHION STATEMENT

The *huipil* featured in Liz Guber's article about Guatemala ["In Living Colour," ELLE Escape, January 2015] caught my attention. I, too, travelled to that beautiful country and was entranced by the handwoven fabrics. At first, to my northern eyes, the varied patterns seemed to clash, but after a while my aesthetic sense caught on and I was hooked. Wearing a *huipil* is a good way to start conversations about Guatemala's beauty, culture and difficult history, for which I have respect and admiration. **JANETTE FECTEAU, ANTIGONISH, N.S.**

TWEET LOVE

@StyleMeChicBlog How gorgeous is @katebosworth on the cover of @ELLE Canada... I'm #obsessed

@WhoIsArlette @RosemaryCounter, that ending to your 'Girl with a Pearl Ring' essay in the Feb. '15 issue of @ELLE Canada? Superb! Somewhere, Ariel is crying.

@kirstinestewart Feminism in the time of the hashtag via @ELLECanada #HeForShe #YesAllWomen

@angemoless Just thought I would say how inspired I am by this month's issue of @ELLECanada #feminism #womansrights #woman boss #EqualRights

@YWCAToronto Great feature by @AntoniaZ in @ELLECanada on the explosion of digital feminism and what it means for our world.

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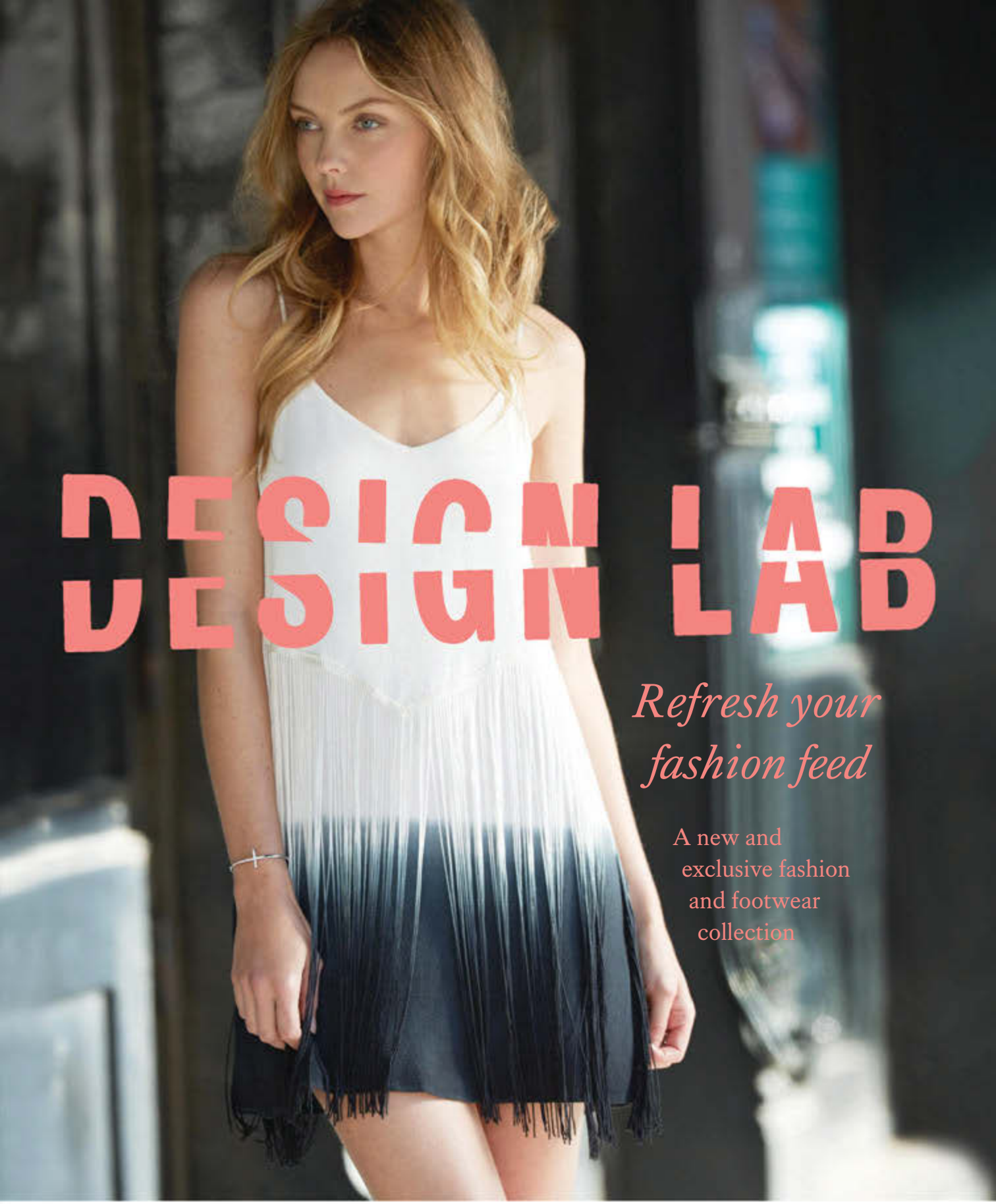
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STEEL & CERAMIC CHRONOGRAPH

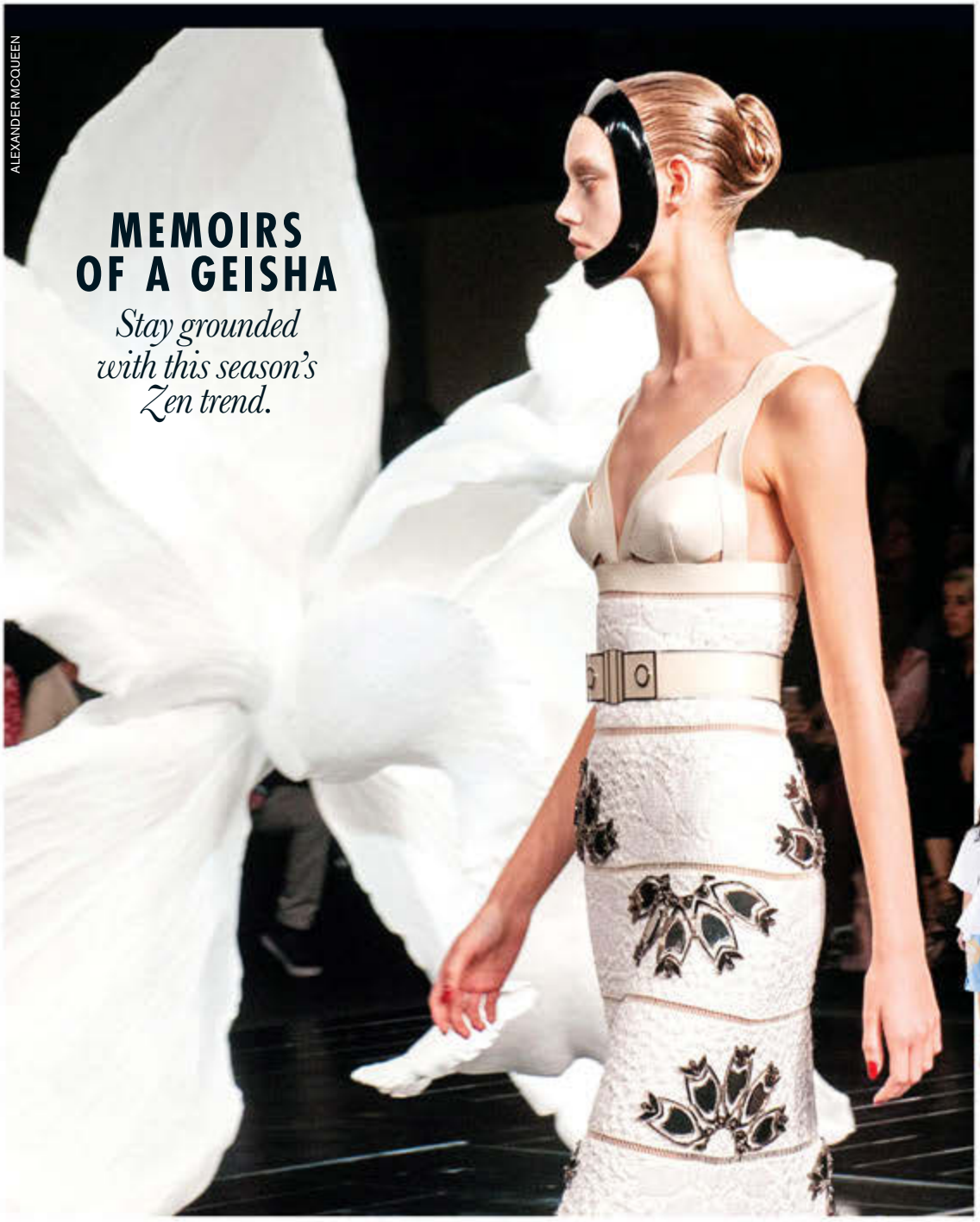
Cara Delevingne challenges rules. Being free-minded is her motto. Like TAG Heuer, she defies conventions and never cracks under pressure.


DESIGN LAB
Refresh your fashion feed
A new and exclusive fashion and footwear collection

HUDSON'S BAY

MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA

Stay grounded with this season's Zen trend.



ALEXANDER MCQUEEN

EDITOR'S POV Designers gave audiences something to meditate on during the spring/summer 2015 shows, with origami folds (Jonathan Saunders), samurai shoulders (Edun) and monastic cloaks (Marni) embodying a Zen attitude. While the kimono was reinvented across the board and the obi elevated to cult accessory, the Japanese influence at Alexander McQueen gave way to the new warrior princess—face mask and fearlessness included.

LISA GUIMOND

IMAXTREE (RUNWAY)



EDUN

PEACE OF MIND A variation on an Eastern-inspired theme emerged on s/s 2015 runways.



MARNI



JONATHAN SAUNDERS



CÉLINE



CONSCIOUS COUPLING

OLIVIA WILDE IS THE FACE OF H&M'S LATEST CAMPAIGN.

H&M has nabbed actress and eco-supporter Olivia Wilde to be the face of its latest Conscious Exclusive collection, which arrives in stores on April 16. Made from earth-friendly materials like organic cotton, linen and silk, the pieces take inspiration from African, Indian and Asian cultures in both cut and details, including hand-drawn prints. The focus of the collection is on dresses, but we can't resist this kimono-inspired jumpsuit ($99, hm.com).



LATEST & GREATEST

STYLE SCOOP

What's cool, cutting edge & important.

EDITORS' PICK
GIMME SHELTER

April showers don't stand a chance with this 100-percent-waterproof cape from Canadian label Trout ($545, troutrainwear.com). It's the chicest way to weather any storm—you might find us sporting it even when the sun is shining.



MUST-HAVE: ELA'S ELEGANT NEW EVENING BAGS

Just in time for wedding season, Ela, our homegrown go-to for covetable leather carryalls, is launching a first-ever line of evening bags exclusively for Holt Renfrew. Featuring the brand's signature asymmetrical closure and luxe details like embroidery and custom monogramming, these bags will elevate even the most unfortunate bridesmaid gown (from $250, holtrenfrew.com). ▷

TEXT BY CHARLOTTE HERROLD


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Rich cream
Continuous release hydration
NEW / FOR NORMAL TO COMBINATION SKIN
Gel
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NEW / FOR EYES
Instant -2°C cooling effect.
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BIOTHERM
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Soothes even the most sensitive skin
Regenerates the look of your skin day after day
Protects from daily environmental stress
†Instrumental test, 20 subjects – Cumulative duration for a 50 ml jar based on 8 h of hydration per application.
** While quantities last.
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RECEIVE YOUR COMPLEMENTARY SAMPLE TODAY AT YOUR CLOSEST BIOTHERM COUNTER.**





CELEB-COLLAB ALERT!

Olivia Palermo x Aspinal of London

Street-style queen Olivia Palermo can officially add "fashion designer" to her list of titles. Following her collab with Florentine footwear line Aquazzura last fall, the former reality-TV star has teamed up with Aspinal of London to create the perfect handbag for spring. Available this month, the limited-edition Marylebone Tech Tote ($1,892, aspinaloflondon.com) has built-in phone and tablet ports for recharging on the go, and 100 percent of its sales support school building in Kenya.







ONE-STOP SHOP

THEORY EXPANDS WITH BAGS AND SHOES.

Get excited: This spring, Theory is rounding out its simple-yet-sophisticated line of ready-to-wear with its first accessories line. Featuring three styles of handbags and two styles of made-in-Italy footwear (created by award-winning designer Paul Andrew), the collection raises the question "Why choose just one?" (Shoes from $496; bags from $370, theory.com)

















FLASH CHAT

Five minutes with Betina Holte.

After working with Zac Posen for three years, Denmark-born, New York-based Betina Holte is launching a namesake collection of "seasonless staples" (from $200, betinaholte.com) this month. We found out what's inspiring the model turned designer and mother-to-be. (Her hubby is Madonna's ex Carlos Leon.)

What's the most important lesson you learned from Zac Posen? "My confidence in draping. I learned where to start and when to let go of pieces that you think are going one way but then end up looking different. It's also sort of a life lesson."

What's your favourite creative medium? "I love chiffon because of the way it moves. It needs to be long; it needs to flow and be picked up by the wind. When you put a print on top of that, it becomes magical."

How much does your native Denmark influence your style? "There's a minimalistic style there that I instinctively go for. When I design, I start with myself—something that I would like to have or feel is missing from my wardrobe. I like the idea of pieces that go from day to evening. We're busy girls—we have a life."

What do you love most about your new collection? "It's about layering. The same silhouettes and basics will be available year-round in different fabrics. It's nice to have those go-to pieces in your wardrobe that always work."

Where do you see your line going in the next five years? "We just designed a shoe collection, and we're looking at bags. I love lingerie, and I'm even thinking of menswear. My husband is a huge inspiration—he has great style."

With so much on the go, how do you stay centred? "I breathe and count to 10 and take a moment to focus on the positive. If everything else fails, I force myself to smile and eventually my mood actually changes." ☐

TEXT BY CHARLOTTE HERROLD


AVAILABLE AT HUDSON'S BAY, SEPHORA, SHOPPERS DRUG MART
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#ELLECanadaCloset

Polyester and spandex sweater, Winners ($49.99, winners.ca); polyester skirt, Lacoste ($110, shop.lacoste.ca); PVC visor, Hunter ($50, ca.hunterboots.com); neoprene arm band, Lolë ($30, lolewomen.com); polyurethane and rubber sneakers, Aldo ($120, aldoshoes.com); metal and plastic bracelets, Topshop ($14 each, topshop.com); graphite racquet, Babolat ($189.99, at Sporting Life, sportinglife.ca); plastic whistle, Fox 40 ($7.99, at Sport Chek, sportchek.ca); cotton and polyester clutch, 424 Fifth ($129, at Hudson's Bay, thebay.com)



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See page 200 for details.

FASHION MOVES

GOOD SPORT

Go ahead, get in the game! Channel your inner athlete (whether she exists or not) with neon touches, techy fabrics and flashy kicks.

Styled by Juliana Schiavinatto
Photographs by Evaan Kheraj

Spring's hottest footwear is all about comfort, so lace up!



DANIEL HARRISON (9, 10 & 11)

ROADRUNNERS **1.** Leather and suede, Valentino ($845, at ssense.com). **2.** Nylon, Golden Goose Deluxe Brand ($570, goldengoosedeluxebrand.com). **3.** Suede and rubber mesh, Aldo ($90, aldoshoes.com). **4.** Textile and rubber, Adidas by Mary Katrantzou ($180, at Holt Renfrew, holtrenfrew.com). **5.** Suede, Hogan ($497.03, at farfetch.com). **6.** Leather, Jimmy Choo ($625, at NET-A-PORTER.com). **7.** Leather and suede, MM6 Maison Martin Margiela ($490, at ssense.com). **8.** Leather, Jeffrey Campbell ($170, jeffreycampbellshoes.com). **9.** Nylon, New Balance ($99.99, at Sporting Life, sportinglife.ca). **10.** Leather, cotton and rubber, Joe Fresh ($39, joefresh.com). **11.** Rubber, Call It Spring ($49.99, callitspring.com). **12.** Leather and nylon, Burberry ($650, at Holt Renfrew, holtrenfrew.com).

viewa See these shoes in action by scanning with the free ***viewa*** app.

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Polyester and elastane top, Beth Richards ($160, bethrichards.com); jersey swimsuit, Chanel ($1,350, chanel.com); polycarbonate sunglasses, Komono ($70, komono.com); rubber and metal headphones, Winners ($16, winners.ca); tweed and metal bracelets, Chanel ($1,625, chanel.com); sequined bracelets, Topshop ($12 each, topshop.com); calfskin and rubber sandals, Hugo Hugo Boss ($395, hugoboss.com)





DANIEL HARRISON

SHADY LADY **1.** Metal, Urban Outfitters ($20, urbanoutfitters.com). **2.** Acrylic, Topshop ($27, topshop.com). **3.** Acetate and titanium, Illevesta ($411, at shopsuperstreet.com). **4.** Metal and acetate, Miu Miu ($415, miumiu.com). **5.** Epoxy resin and metal, Karen Walker ($457.97, at Saks Fifth Avenue, saksfifthavenue.com). **6.** Acetate, Mykita + Maison Martin Margiela ($560, mykita.com). **7.** Polycarbonate, Komono ($63.99, komono.com). **8.** 18-karat-gold-plated titanium and leather, Chrome Hearts ($980, at Josephson Opticians, josephson.ca). **9.** Metal, House of Holland ($252, at NET-A-PORTER.com). **10.** Plastic, Kate Spade ($190, at Hudson's Bay, thebay.com). **11.** Metal, H&M ($14.95, hm.com). **12.** Metal, Asos ($26, asos.com).

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See these sunglasses in action by scanning with the free ***viewa*** app.

#ELLECanadaCloset

On Taylor: Polyester and silk bomber, Titika ($98, titika.ca); rayon and nylon polo, RW&CO. ($59.90, rw-co.com); viscose-polyester shorts, H&M ($59.95, hm.com); leather and metal cuffs, Topshop ($28 each, topshop.com); cotton socks, Urban Outfitters ($14, urbanoutfitters.com); microfibre and suede roller skates, Goldie Glitter ($188, at rollerskatin.ca). On Symone: Nylon bomber, Mackage ($350, mackage.com); cotton top, MICHAEL Michael Kors ($125, michaelkors.com); polyester shorts, Gap ($36.95, gapcanada.ca); acrylic and nylon socks, Urban Outfitters ($16, urbanoutfitters.com); mirrored lambskin-leather headband (worn as a choker), Jennifer Behr ($78, jennifer behr.com); polyurethane clutch, Aldo ($55, aldoshoes.com); metal and plastic bracelets, Aldo ($12 each, aldoshoes.com); sequined bracelets, Topshop ($14 each, topshop.com); leather and suede roller skates, Dominion ($188, at rollerskatin.ca). Models, Symone Challenger & Taylor W (elitemodel.com); makeup, Susana Hong (P1M.ca); hair, Natalie Ventola (P1M.ca); art direction, Brittany Eccles





DANIEL HARRISON

BOMBS AWAY **1.** Neoprene, Winners ($124.99, winners.ca). **2.** Polyester, Adidas by Stella McCartney ($110, adidas.ca). **3.** Polyester, RW&CO. ($119.90, rw-co.com). **4.** Tencel and Lyocell, H&M Conscious Exclusive ($129, hm.com). **5.** Polyester and spandex, French Connection ($118, canada.frenchconnection.com). **6.** Cotton-viscose and nylon, Banana Republic ($110, bananarepublic.ca). **7.** Polyester and cotton, Gap ($59.95, gapcanada.ca). **8.** Cotton, rayon, nylon and spandex, BCBGMAXAZRIA ($338, bcbg.com). **9.** Polyester blend, American Apparel ($110, americanapparel.ca). **10.** Satin, MSGM ($655, at matchesfashion.com). **11.** Polyester, Jones New York ($169, at Hudson's Bay, thebay.com). **12.** Neoprene, Asos ($139, asos.com). □

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LANCÔME

PARIS

Sweet


TEMPERLEY LONDON

Rebellious


FAUSTO PUGLISI


Viscose kimono, Zara ($99.90, zara.com)

DOUBLE VISION

HANG LOOSE

Meet the season's most transformative topper: The kimono takes you from urban warrior to polished preppy.


Silk shirt, Bruno Cucinelli ($1,120, at Holt Renfrew, holtrenfrew.com)


Wood, acrylic and leather necklace, Monies ($244, at farfetch.com)


Viscose and acetate shorts, Lala Berlin ($391.57, at farfetch.com)


PVC purse, Asos ($74.57, asos.com)

Leather belt, Alaïa ($3,565, at NET-A-PORTER.com)


Metal, acetate and crystal sunglasses, Miu Miu ($415, at Holt Renfrew, holtrenfrew.com)


Leather sneakers, Lacoste ($125, at Foot Locker, footlocker.ca)


Leather sandals, Winners ($59.99, winners.ca)

STYLED BY JULIANA SCHIAVINATTO; IMAXTREE (RUNWAY)





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SPOTLIGHT

LIGHTEN UP

A crisp all-white palette is the chicest way to make a fresh start this spring.

1. Cotton and linen hat, H&M ($19.95, hm.com). **2.** Denim jeans, Winners ($99.99, winners.ca). **3.** Leather backpack, Proenza Schouler ($2,275, at ssense.com). **4.** Nylon and spandex dress, 424 Fifth ($119, at Hudson's Bay, thebay.com). **5.** Leather sneakers, Rudsak ($135, rudsak.com). **6.** Lyocell and cotton polo, Filippa K ($135, at The Block, theblock.ca). **7.** Polyester skirt, Pink Tartan ($295, pinktartan.com). **8.** Polyurethane and rayon jacket, Reitmans ($85, reitmans.com). **9.** Leather sandals, Marc by Marc Jacobs ($349, at NET-A-PORTER.com). **10.** Polyester and spandex dress, RW&CO. ($99.90, rw-co.com). **11.** Leather bag, Anya Hindmarch ($1,575, at Holt Renfrew, holtrenfrew.com). **12.** Canvas sneakers, Winners ($99.99, winners.ca).

DIOR

VIKTOR & ROLF

HERMÈS

CHANEL

DAKS

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NINE-TO-FIVE

LONG FORM

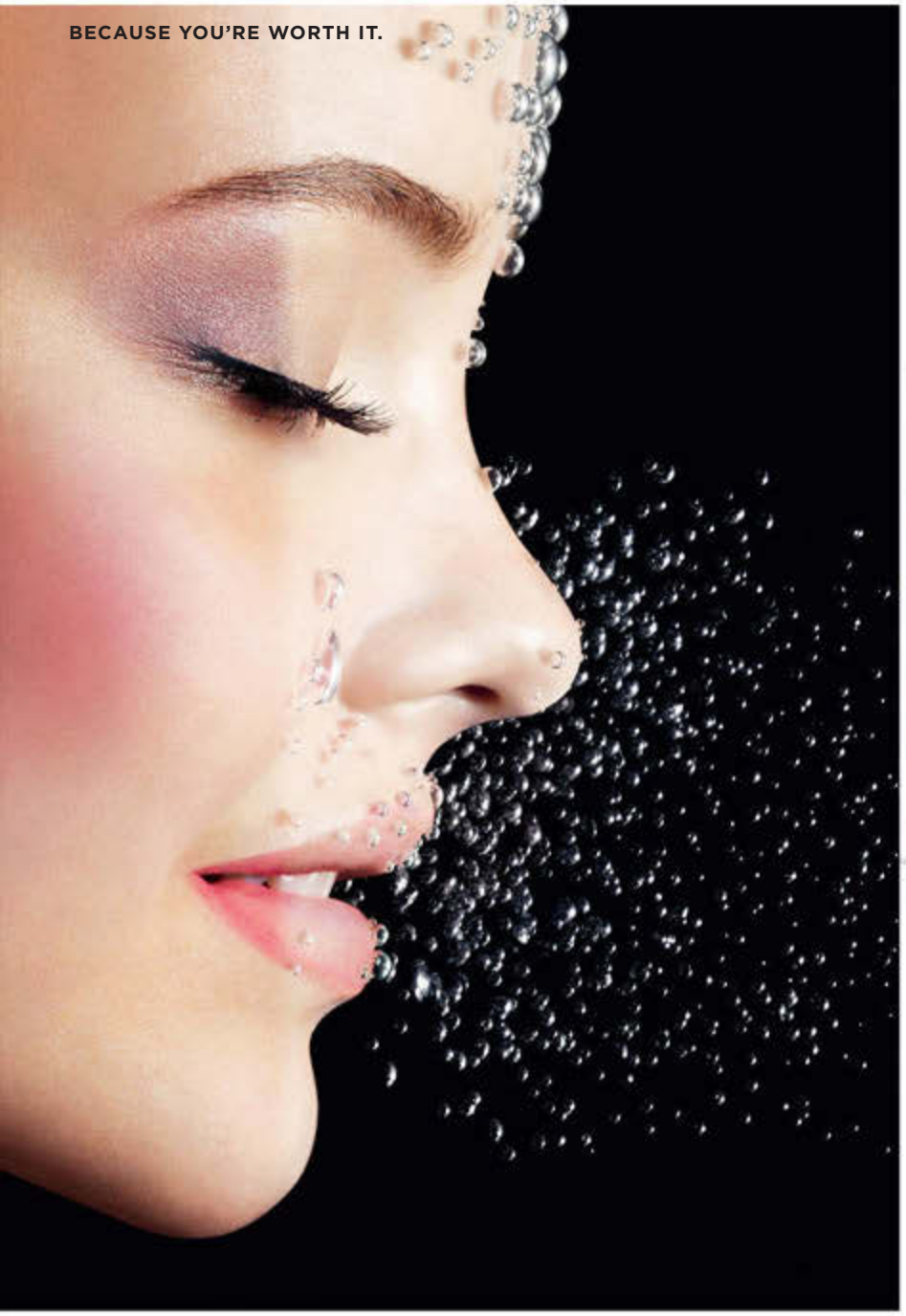
No boring blazers here. Make the tunic your new workwear staple.



1. Wool and silk tunic, Chloé ($1,845, at matchesfashion.com). **2.** Silk tunic, Filippa K ($347, filippa-k.com). **3.** Cotton tunic, Rudsak ($95, rudsak.com). **4.** Polyester and elastane tunic, Dorothy Perkins ($54, at Hudson's Bay, thebay.com). **5.** Acetate and viscose tunic, Raey ($440, at matchesfashion.com). **6.** Cotton, polyester and flax tunic, MSGM ($465, at matchesfashion.com). **7.** Polyester trousers, Liu Jo ($120, liujo.com). **8.** Leather purse, Rudsak ($215, rudsak.com). **9.** Faux-leather pencil skirt, Reitmans ($40, reitmans.com). **10.** Polyester bag, Stella McCartney ($1,095, at Holt Renfrew, holtrenfrew.com). **11.** 18-karat-gold and tortoiseshell sunglasses, Thom Browne ($875, at Josephson Opticians, josephson.ca). **12.** Leather and wood sandals, 424 Fifth ($119, at Hudson's Bay, thebay.com). **13.** Cotton-blend pants, 3.1 Phillip Lim ($438, at NET-A-PORTER.com).

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This micellar solution's fragrance-free formula is super gentle yet removes makeup easily without any tugging!

JESSICA, beautezine.com

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NARS Soft Velvet Loose Powder in Desert ($42)



SHIATZY CHEN



EDUN



Physicians Formula Organic Wear BB Cream ($18.49)

BEAUTY MOOD

CURATED CALM

Sure, Zen is a mindset, but why stop there? Architecturally inspired makeup ushers in a balanced look.



The Geisha Liner Liquid Eyeliner ($30)



BURBERRY PRORSUM



Giorgio Armani Rouge Ecstasy Lipstick in 414 ($38)



DIESEL

ANDREW GN



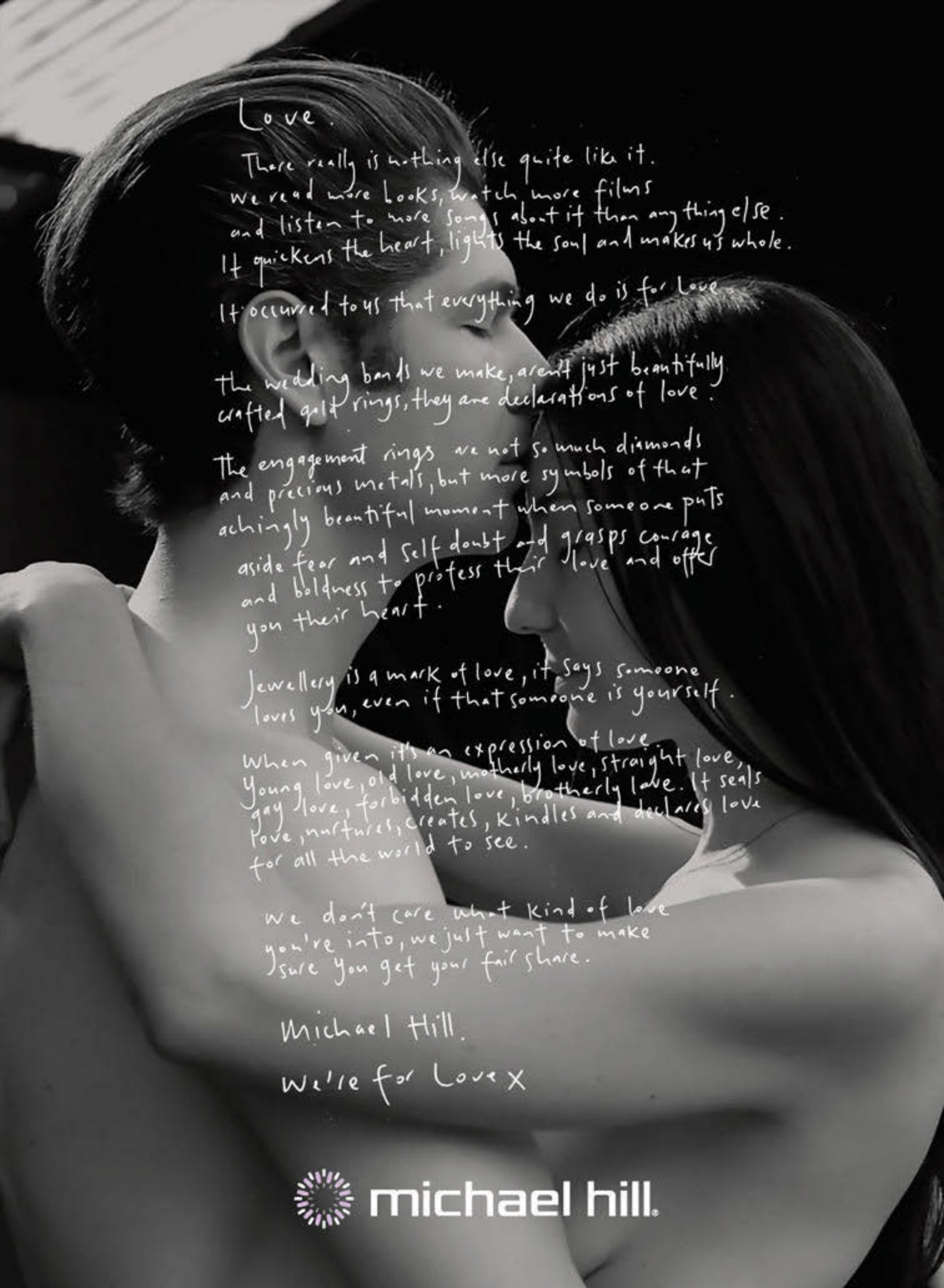
Sephora Collection Detox It Out: Charcoal Swabs ($8 for a pack of 30). For details, see Shopping Guide.



The Body Shop Drops of Youth Bouncy Sleeping Mask ($30)

MONCLER

TEXT BY VICTORIA DIPLACIDO; GEOFFREY ROSS (PRODUCTS); IMAXTREE (RUNWAY)


Love.
There really is nothing else quite like it.
We read more books, watch more films
and listen to more songs about it than anything else.
It quickens the heart, lights the soul and makes us whole.
It occurred to us that everything we do is for Love.
The wedding bands we make, aren't just beautifully
crafted gold rings, they are declarations of love.
The engagement rings are not so much diamonds
and precious metals, but more symbols of that
achingly beautiful moment when someone puts
aside fear and self doubt and grasps courage
and boldness to profess their love and offer
you their heart.
Jewellery is a mark of love, it says someone
loves you, even if that someone is yourself.
When given it's an expression of love.
Young love, old love, motherly love, straight love,
gay love, forbidden love, brotherly love. It seals
love, nurtures, creates, kindles and declares love
for all the world to see.
We don't care what kind of love
you're into, we just want to make
sure you get your fair share.
Michael Hill.
We're for Love x
michael hill.



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FIRST BLUSH

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GET THE LOOK **1. Dior Glow Maximizer Light Boosting Primer ($43)** This backstage staple creates a smooth base and can be used as a highlighter for cheeks, lips and lids. **2. Dior Rosy Glow Healthy Glow Awakening Blush ($46)** Think outside the cheeks! Sweep it lightly above the crease of the eye to lift, or pair some with foundation and apply along the sides of the neck to lengthen and contour. **3. Diorshow Mascara ($31)** Keep romantic makeup modern with lashings of black mascara to define the eyes. Apply in a zigzag motion, and use the tip of the wand for precision to accentuate the outer lashes even more. **4. Diorshow Fusion Mono Eyeshadow in Chimère ($33)** Apply this champagne-tinted shade across the lid with a fingertip, or use a brush for more precision. **5. Dior Cheek & Lip Glow Instant Blushing Rosy Tint ($39)** A whisper of pink on the cheeks is romantic and fresh. Dab a little of this lightweight gel on the fingertips and, using a circular motion, apply to the apples of the cheeks.

DANIEL HARRISON (PRODUCTS)

KISS & TELL

COMMAND ATTENTION WITH A TAKE-NO-PRISONERS STATEMENT LIP. WE'RE CURRENTLY OBSESSED WITH DUSTY REDS AND BERRY SHADES FOR HEIGHTENED LOOK-AT-ME LIPS.



GET THE LOOK **1. Dior Skinflash Radiance Booster Pen ($48)** Sweep this radiance-boosting pen on throughout the day to wake up tired-looking skin, brighten the inner area of the eye and highlight your (killer) cheekbones. **2. Dior Eye Reviver Palette ($63)** Balance a bright lip with a polished but subtle eyeshadow. Want more edge? Add a light sweep of black or grey on the lids and layer until you're satisfied with the look. **3. Rouge Dior Baume Natural Lip Treatment in Lili ($37)** A double-duty lipstick containing skincare ingredients keeps lips hydrated and colour boosted. Pick a high-impact shade and commence your world takeover. **4. Diorskin Airflash Spray Foundation ($62)** The most enduring beauty look? Flawless skin and a statement lip. For an airbrushed effect, use this buildable spray foundation. Just mist it on, layer and then buff with a makeup brush. **5. Dior Contour Couture Colour Lip Liner in Lili ($30)** Create a bold runway-ready lip with a waterproof liner in the same shade as your lipstick. ▷



For more expert beauty tips and to book your Dior makeover at Hudson's Bay, go to **ELLECanada.com/shopspringbeauty**.

EYE CANDY

A SULTRY SMOKY EYE ALWAYS MAKES AN IMPACT, WHETHER YOU'RE ON THE RED CARPET, THE DANCE FLOOR OR THE BEST FIRST DATE EVER.



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GET THE LOOK **1. Diorskin Star Studio Makeup ($50)** Choose a colour that's close to your skin tone and swipe some on your jawbone. Check your face in the mirror in natural light. If the foundation is invisible, you've found your new (makeup) life partner. **2. Dior Addict Fluid Stick in Kiss Me ($39)** Balance an eye-focused look with a glossy lipstick hybrid. Choose a warm nude or natural peachy shade as a sophisticated complement. Muah! **3. Dior 5-Colour Eyeshadow in Bar ($63)** A smoky eye starts with a soft, neutral base colour swept across the entire eyelid. Create depth with a charcoal shade in the crease and an inky black in the outer corners of the lid. **4. Diorshow Brow Styler Ultra-Fine Precision Brow Pencil ($30)** Well-groomed, full eyebrows signify youth and act as a frame for your face. Don't leave home without them! **5. Diorshow Art Pen ($32)** Try a felt-tip pen, which is much easier to control and can be used to define eyes with a thin line or create full-blown doe-eyed drama. ☐

TEXT BY VANESSA CRAFT; DANIEL HARRISON (PRODUCTS); STYLED BY JULIANA SCHIAVINATTO (P1M.CA); HAIR STYLING BY JUSTIN GERMAN (P1M.CA)

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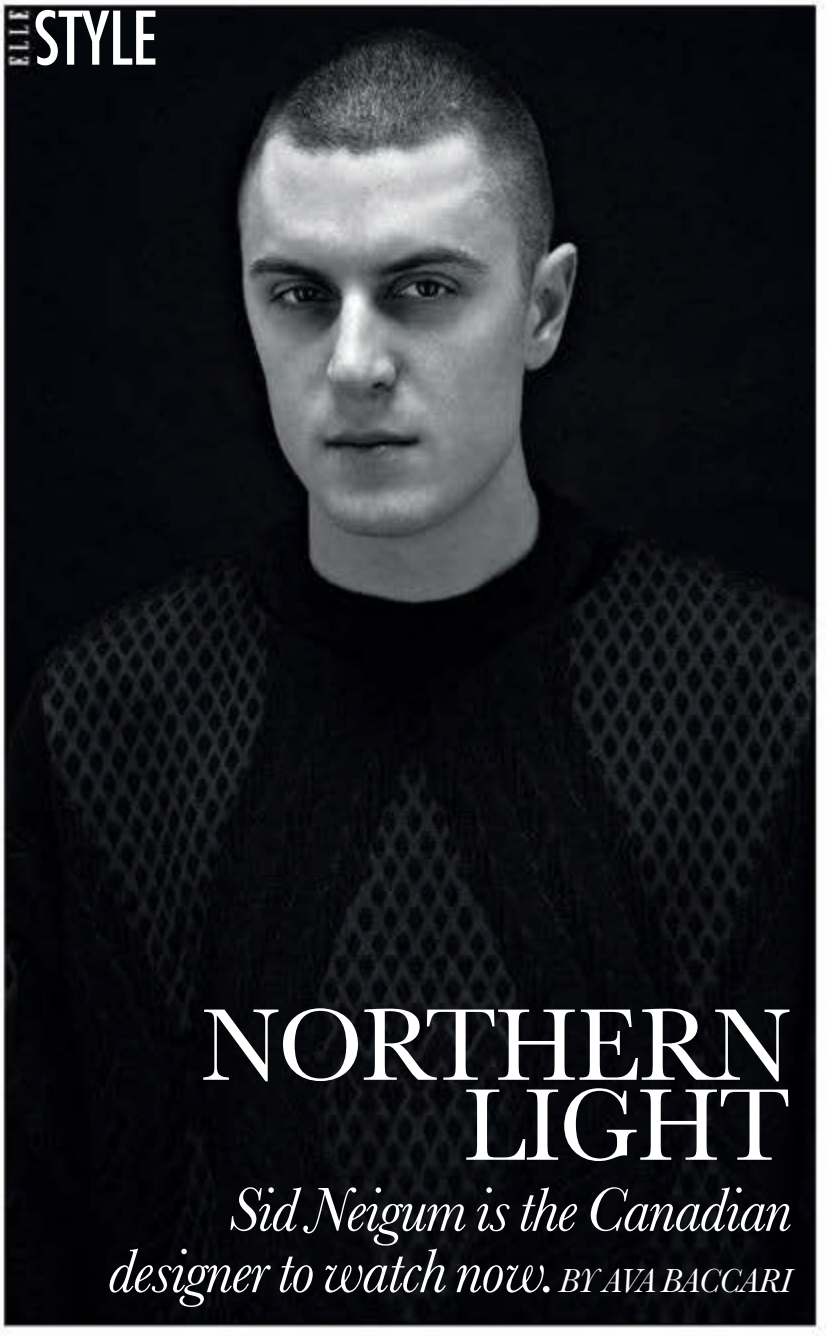


*Based on consumer evaluation at 2 weeks

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NORTHERN LIGHT

Sid Neigum is the Canadian designer to watch now. BY AVA BACCARI

It would be really easy to lose sight of Sid Neigum in his Toronto studio were it not for his quick movements. Dressed entirely in black, he blends in with the puddles of dark fabric that have spilled over into the crisp white space. When I arrive, he emerges from behind a rolling rack of black scarves and darts over to a skirt from his latest collection. Taking it from the mannequin, he tries it on himself to demonstrate its movement. "He really is the best model!" shouts Yin, his seamstress, from a sewing table across the room. Neigum grins and leads me to a lounge where we sit down to chat, away from the distractions of the work in progress. But this doesn't temper his frenetic energy. He fidgets constantly, and I imagine his mind racing with ideas in much the same way. When he speaks, though, he is calmly assured—all his hard work has led, finally, to a breakthrough: "Support from Canadian retailers has been really difficult to get," says the Edmonton-born designer. "But now that's changing for me."

For the first time since Neigum launched his eponymous label in 2009, his clothes have been picked up by two major Canadian retailers: His spring/summer 2015 collection, an architectural feat inspired by modular origami, is now available at The Room at Hudson's Bay and Toronto boutique Jonathan + Olivia. Neigum, who produces every garment in his Toronto studio with Yin, worked right through the Christmas holidays to get those orders finished for February. No easy task: His designs feature intricate laser-cut details, meticulous draping and careful folding, demonstrating a mastery of technique that puts him leaps ahead of his peers. Few attendees were surprised when that collection won him the Mercedez-Benz Start Up competition at World MasterCard Fashion Week in Toronto last October.

The $30,000 prize, which helped fund Neigum's fall/winter 2015 collection and runway presentation, seems to be part of an ongoing winning streak for the young designer, who most recently claimed the Swarovski Award for Emerging Talent, Fashion, at the glitzy 2015 Canadian Arts & Fashion Awards gala in January. Beyond indicating that Neigum might just be the most exciting young talent working in Canada now, these cash prizes have enabled him to financially break even for the first time in four years. But the designer, who graduated from New York's prestigious Fashion Institute of Technology, is the first to admit that they're not enough to guarantee long-term financial security—Jeremy Laing, after all, won an inaugural CAFA award in 2014 and quietly closed up shop the same year. "That money only lasts ▷

LUIS MORA

“trust me, this stylish bunch will please any

flowerista!”

Essie



new
spring collection
2015

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"He has talent, but he's a smart business person as well, and that's why his business is now accelerating."

so long, so you need to think about a way to have longevity," says Neigum, adding that the business side of the industry can be foreign to many designers.

Having a father who is a business owner has given him a critical advantage, says Neigum. Susan Langdon, executive director of Toronto Fashion Incubator, where Neigum's studio is located, has seen that paternal advice at work. She describes how Neigum invested early prize money to attend the Coterie trade show in New York and a fabric-sourcing event in Seoul and to hire a sample maker. "He has talent and wonderful designs, of course, but he's a smart business person as well, and that's why his business is now accelerating."

Neigum also knows how to put himself out there, constantly emailing and cold-calling stores he wants to be sold in. "It's like a global attack," he says, shifting forward to the edge of the couch. "I'll try to get an appointment with anybody and then fly to that city and try to lock down a sale." He leans back and lowers his voice. "I'll do whatever it takes."

Often the conversation about the struggle faced by Canadian designers turns to examples like Erdem and DSquared2, who both reached international acclaim only after leaving Canada. But, according to Neigum, the solution is not as simple as making a break for London or Milan. "I would never be able to have this in either of those cities," he says, gesturing to his vast studio space and noting that the monthly rent of $1,000 would likely be 10 times that amount elsewhere. "It wouldn't be feasible, plain and simple."

But staying at home comes with the unique challenge of attracting attention from local and international markets, both of which are apprehensive about taking a chance on Canadian labels. "American designers get huge support from their own retailers, and then they're able to start expanding into Europe and Asia," says Neigum. "But Canadian retailers buy more conservatively; they follow what's happening in New York rather than make their own judgments. I think Nicholas Mellamphy [vice-president and buying director] of The Room at Hudson's Bay is someone who's going against that grain."

Neigum intuitively knew that being carried at The Room was critical to his success in Canada—so he set his mind to it. He enticed Mellamphy to visit his studio last fall. "We were really impressed with not only the quality of the garments but also his vision and the way he is able to speak about what he wants to achieve," recalls Mellamphy. His new collection was introduced at The Room in February with a splashy installation at the entrance—something previously reserved for internationally acclaimed designers such as Thom Browne and Roksanda Ilincic. "He is doing things in this market that no one else is really doing," says Mellamphy. "He's as good as anyone else around the world."

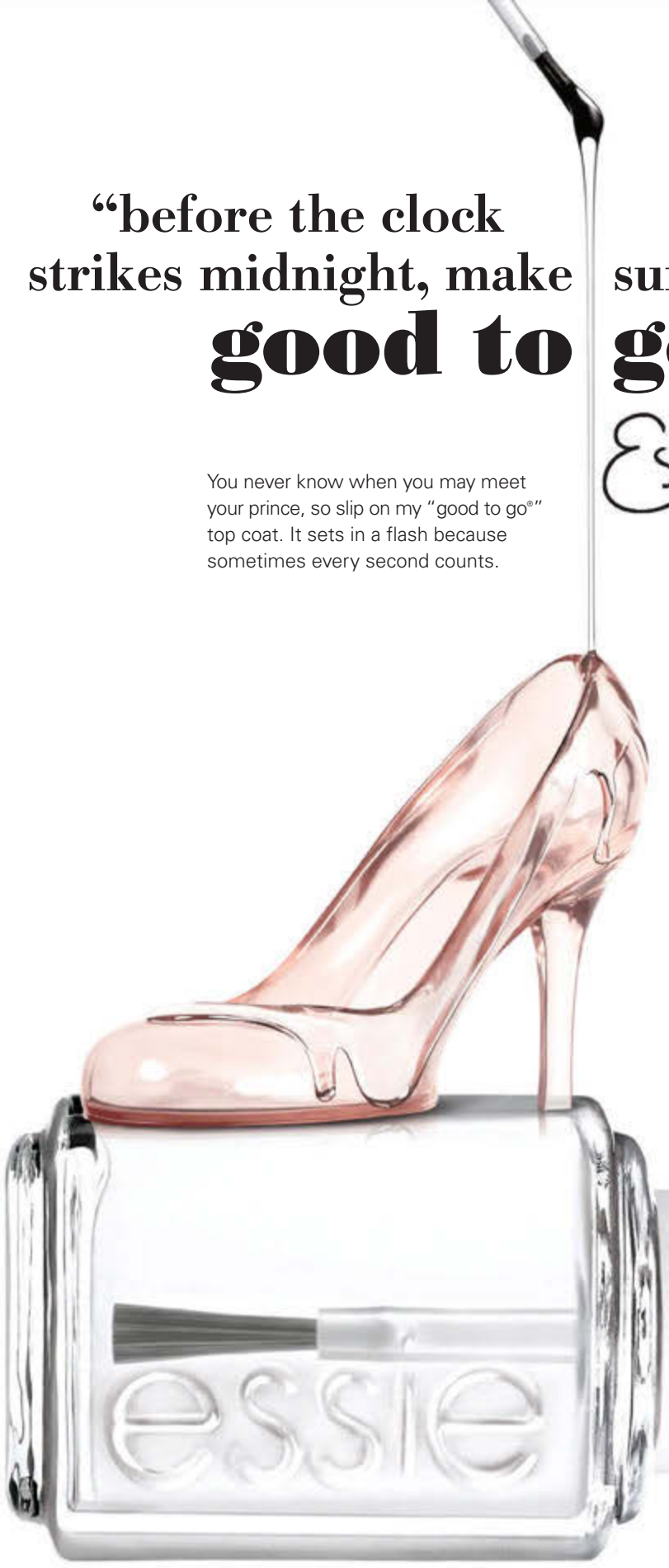
Neigum knows it too, as he contemplates where in the world he would like his collections to end up next. "There's not really a plan of attack in terms of location," he says after a careful pause. "It's global domination." And his takeover has started right here at home. ☐

JENNA WAKANI

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RESET

Marni designer Consuelo Castiglioni's quirky, intelligent sensibility has been inspiring a devoted following for two decades.



FASHION SCHOOL

"The sleeves are inspired by the school uniforms worn by children I saw in Bhutan. I liked the simplicity of their elegance. Their elongated and sculptural shape fit perfectly with the vertical and geometric lines that defined these looks."

BLANK SLATE

"We started the spring collection with a blank toile, like you do with a painting, and then we added colours, prints, brocades and embroideries."

BEHAVIOUR PATTERNS

"Lately I am more concentrated on solid colours with a distinctive design, but of course I also still wear patterns."

DOT.CALM

"I am a very reserved and calm person, but that doesn't mean I'd describe myself as Zen!"

SERENITY NOW

Cotton and linen coat and leather and cotton belt ($2,957 and $745, marni.com)

FASHION DNA

PATHFINDER

Marni celebrates 20 years of iconoclastic perfection. #Moreplease

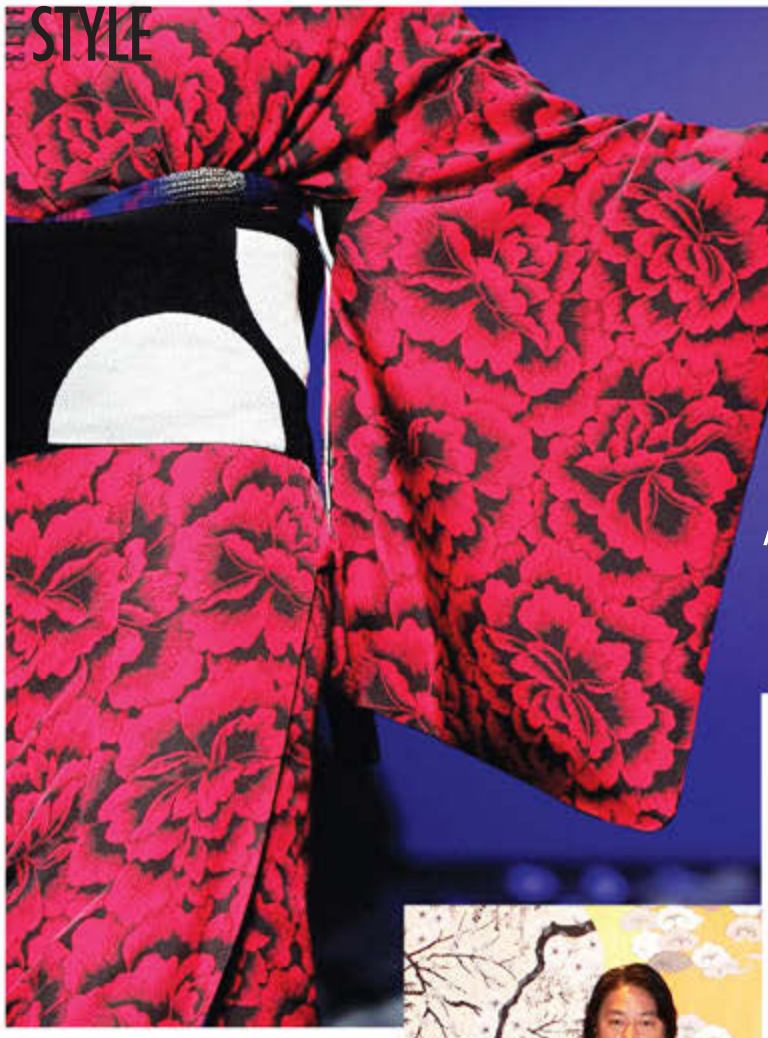
Instead of having a frantic five-minute backstage interview, I was invited to join Marni's designer, Consuelo Castiglioni, for a casual chat in her pop-up Flower Market at Milan's Rotonda della Besana. The one-day market was a celebration of her 20th anniversary and a chance to raise funds for Vimala, a children's charity in India. Although she is soft-spoken and petite, Castiglioni casts a powerful presence. "My career—it came by chance in many ways," she tells me. "I have liked clothes since I was little. I would always steal things from my mother's closet and put looks together, but I never dreamed this would be my life." Looking ahead, she says her goal is to continue having the freedom to do what she wants. "It's not stressful; I have a nice life." Spoken like a true master. ❑

TEXT BY NOREEN FLANAGAN; GEOFFREY ROSS (COAT & BELT); IMAXTREE (RUNWAY)


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INTO THE FOLD

Barbara Balfour explores how one Japanese designer is giving the kimono a modern makeover.









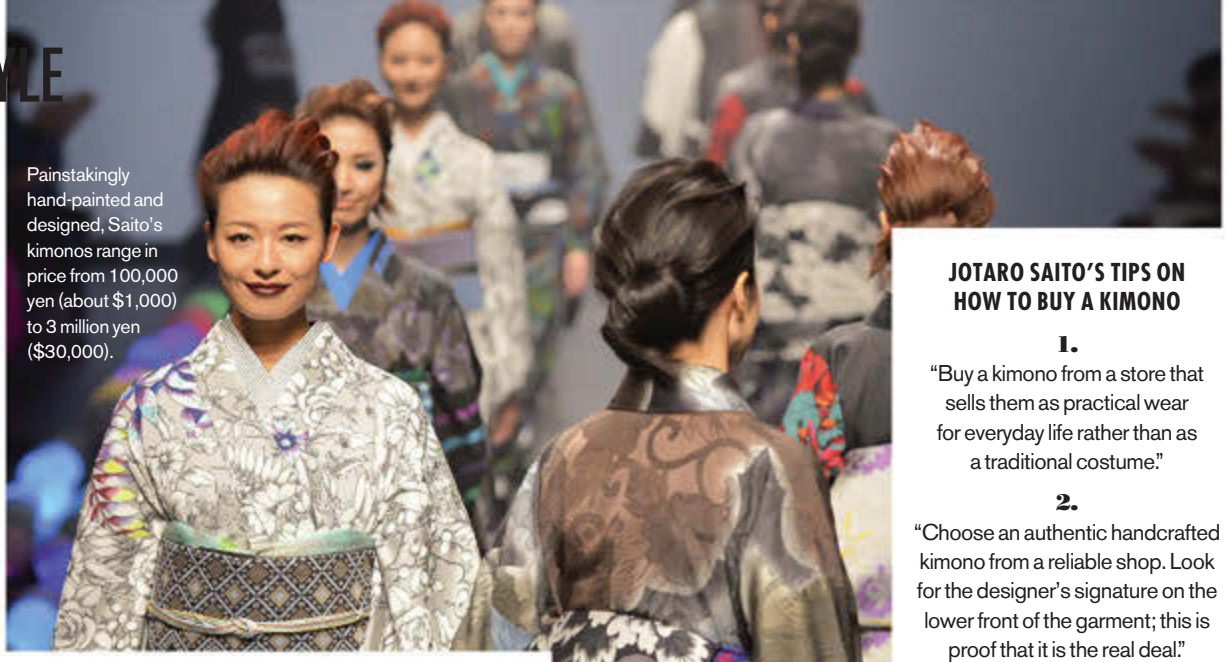
Clockwise, from bottom right: Models at the Jotaro Saito s/s 2015 show at Tokyo Fashion Week; a kimono designed by Saito's grandfather Saizaburo; Saito in his Tokyo shop

As techno beats pulse in sync with the flashing lights and prismatic colours that illuminate the room, rows of kimono-clad ladies with stiffly teased hair sit straight-backed, enraptured, at legendary kimono designer Jotaro Saito's spring/summer 2015 runway show in Tokyo. Many of the attendees' grandmothers once shopped for Saito's grandfather's kimonos. For them, and for this third-generation designer, convergence is the theme of the day: modernity blending with tradition, one generation overlapping another.

For Saito, the only kimono designer in Japan whose collections are regularly featured on the runway, pushing the envelope runs in the family. His grandfather, Saizaburo, was a celebrated dye artist and the first kimono designer in history to use his own name on the label when he opened his workshop 81 years ago in Kyoto—Japan's historic capital and the country's centre of textile production for centuries. At the time, the idea of a single artist making a singular piece was unheard of. This is an idea unique to the 20th century; historically, kimono makers remained nameless. Saito's father, Sansai, also took considerable risks by mixing unconventional colours within the same garment: Combining grey (traditionally worn by older married women) and pink (historically reserved for young girls), for example, challenged social norms. Ironically, while Saito, 45, is considered a rule breaker in the kimono world for juxtaposing geometric patterns with lush florals and using metal studs and zippers as adornment and textiles like denim and fur, the garment's ▷

GETTY IMAGES (MAIN IMAGE); IMAXTREE (RUNWAY); BARBARA BALFOUR (J. SAITO & KIMONO)


TRISTAN
tristanstyle.com



Painstakingly hand-painted and designed, Saito's kimonos range in price from 100,000 yen (about $1,000) to 3 million yen ($30,000).

ties to authenticity and Japanese identity are a construct of the West, says Tamara Joy, chief curator and cultural director at the Morikami Museum and Japanese Gardens in Delray Beach, Fla. "It was Western influence and interaction that made the kimono instantly identifiable as a Japanese national costume, even though it evolved from a Chinese robe and colour-ranking system," says Joy. "Before then, through hundreds of years of Japan's isolation, there was no outside force to say 'Look at this new style; let's change it.'"

By distancing himself from the traditional materials associated with the kimono, Saito is responsible for effectively transforming it into a garment relevant to the 21st century. "Today's Japanese designers are playing with traditional items and recontextualizing them within Western stylistic creations," says Japanese fashion expert Federica Carlotto, a lecturer at Regent's University London and a long-time researcher of the Japanese adoption of Western fashion. "They are retrieving and refreshing traditional know-how within the textile sector; they are deconstructing the body's silhouette as it has been shaped by Western clothing by presenting deformed items of clothing on the catwalks."

Saito's reinvention of the kimono comes at a time when the Japanese have a renewed interest in redefining what it means to wear the traditional garment. "Enough people wanted to be individual that our designs started taking off," says Saito, speaking through a translator in a coffee shop in Tokyo's luxe Roppongi Hills district, where his concept store is located. "Still, my father and I always talk about the importance of preserving traditions in our work. It's all about balance: You can challenge what is considered normal, but you don't want to break every single tradition." ❑

JOTARO SAITO'S TIPS ON HOW TO BUY A KIMONO

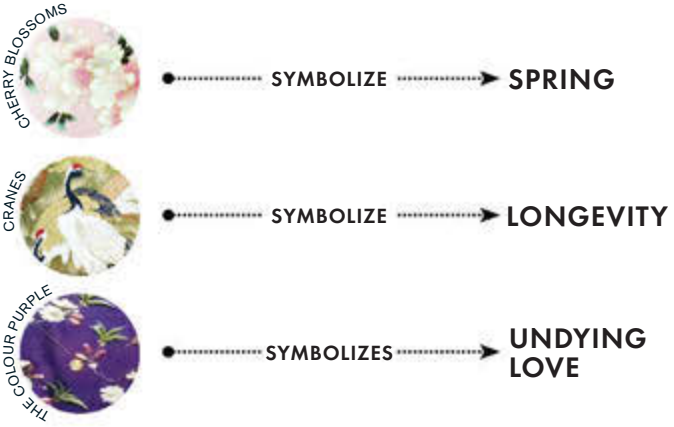
1.
"Buy a kimono from a store that sells them as practical wear for everyday life rather than as a traditional costume."

2.
"Choose an authentic handcrafted kimono from a reliable shop. Look for the designer's signature on the lower front of the garment; this is proof that it is the real deal."

3.
"Buy something that truly appeals to you; arranging and adjusting the kimono to fit with your personal style is a good thing. Wearing it should make you feel luxurious."

SIGN LANGUAGE

Deciphering motifs on traditional Japanese kimonos.



EAST MEETS WEST

Japanese-inspired looks from the s/s 2015 runways.



GETTY IMAGES (MAIN IMAGE); IMAXTREE (RUNWAY); MARIANA LEUNG ("THE COLOUR PURPLE"); PAUL MAC ("CRANES" & "CHERRY BLOSSOMS")


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ELLE RADAR

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GIRLS!

This month, we're celebrating the eccentrics.

STYLE FILES
Bask in the quirky style evolution of Chloë Sevigny with the coffee-table tome *Chloë*. Featuring a collection of personal snapshots, film stills and fashion shots, this illustrated guide to Sevigny's iconic downtown look is a must-have for any self-proclaimed cool girl.

EDITOR'S POV Author, poet and wise woman Maya Angelou gave the world a wealth of brave, inspiring words. Now, nearly a year after her passing, I often find myself thinking about one of the least poetic, but perhaps most fiery and inspiring, of her utterances: "I love to see a young girl go out and grab the world by the lapels. Life's a bitch. You've got to go out and kick ass." This month, spurred on by the drive of women like filmmaker Emily Kai Bock (page 78) who are carving out their own niche, I propose we do just that. I'll even take the first kick.

KATHRYN HUDSON



LATEST & GREATEST

HIT LIST

What we're talking about this month.



GADGET Combine your love of art and music—literally. A Soundwall (from $949, soundwall.com) is a "connected canvas": The image is both a custom work of art and a high-quality wireless speaker that streams your favourite beats.

MUSIC MAKER

Emily Kai Bock is the rising star of the Vimeo generation.

What do silver-screen trailblazers David Fincher and Spike Jonze have in common? Before they made a name for themselves as filmmakers, they workshopped their most whimsical ideas via music videos for artists like Madonna and Björk. Today, the reality for fledgling directors is far from easy. And yet, through thick and thin, Toronto-raised, New York-based Emily Kai Bock keeps blowing people away with her 35-mm-exclusive endeavours.

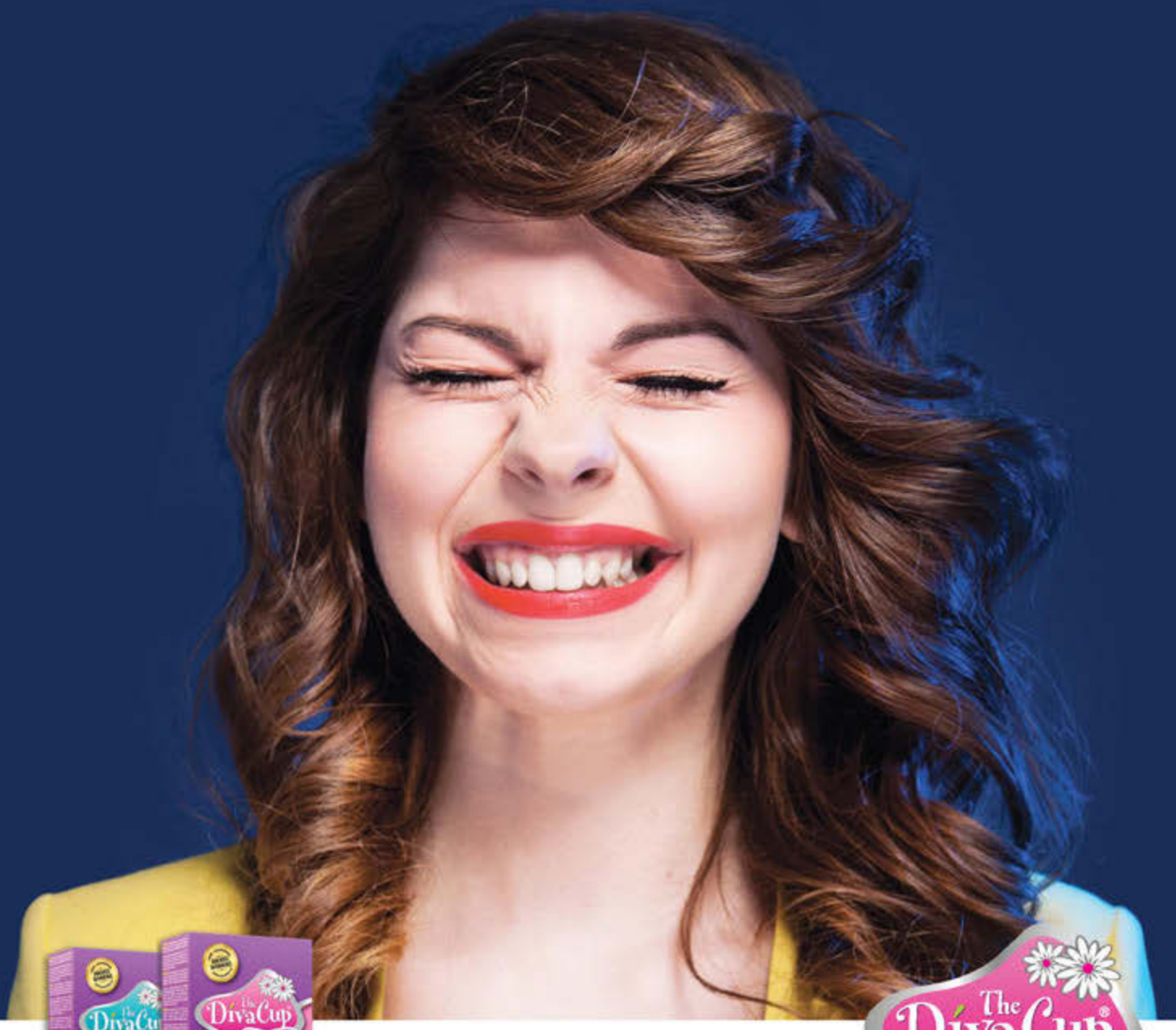
Whether she is enhancing Grimes' spellbinding electro or Arcade Fire's epic alt-rock, the 31-year-old director conjures up worlds that are at once expansive, enigmatic and profoundly intimate. "With YouTube, Google and Vimeo, images have never been more in the foreground," says Kai Bock. "People are watching videos more than ever; it's how we experience music."

With filmmaker Paul Thomas Anderson singing her praises and Lorde calling on her to cook up a Lynchian companion piece to her latest *Hunger Games* single, Kai Bock is the closest thing the music-video world has to a shooting star—and a hard-working one at that. She toils away on advertising gigs for clients like Coca-Cola and Diesel to be able to, as she puts it, "make four or five music videos for free."

Kai Bock is also juggling a debut feature and a doc about her experimental-music pals Tonstartssbandht. She's such an in-demand creative commodity that one tends to forget she cut her teeth in an industry that's akin to a locker room full of camera-toting dudes where women rarely call the shots. "We live in a culture of girls as spectators, where we watch the guys do all the important stuff," suggests Kai Bock, when asked why we don't see more women in the director's chair. "A big reason why I give interviews is to encourage more women to put themselves out there and not be afraid of technology, of getting their hands dirty or scraping their knees. It's way more fun that way." **MICHAEL-OLIVER HARDING**▷

OMG!

The DivaCup… Brilliant!





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WATCH Just when we thought we were over post-apocalyptic teen melodramas, along came *Divergent*. Confession: It had a lot to do with how handsome Theo James is when he broods. Luckily, he's reprising his role as Shailene Woodley's love interest in *Insurgent* (in theatres on March 20), the second instalment in the saga of an America divided into factions based on disposition (Amity for peace lovers, Candor for truth tellers, etc.). In this chapter, the fate of the civilized world seems to be resting on a ragtag bunch of misfits, including Woodley and James—a plot that should involve many reasons for James to be shirtless, right?

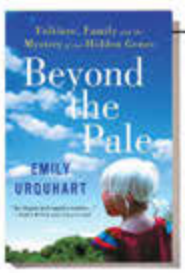


PRINCESS DREAMS If "Under the Sea," "A Whole New World" and "Colors of the Wind" remain on your iPod to this day, listen up: Alan Menken, the man behind those epic Disney music moments, is writing the score for *Galavant*, an all-singing, all-lampooning fairy tale on small screens this winter. British-Canadian actress Karen David, who plays the feisty princess Isabella, almost couldn't handle how much the Menken connection meant to her: "When I sang my ballad 'Love Is Strange' in front of Alan, I got goosebumps—and a little teary. I remember being in the choir in high school in Toronto and singing all of his Disney songs. Never in a million years did I think I would be working with him. I just had to pinch myself!"



DRINK If you've been dying to know what George and Amal Clooney served for dessert at their wedding, we've got an update: It was espresso, vanilla or chocolate gelato with a generous glug of Casamigos Tequila ($69.95, lcbo.com) poured overtop: "People were lining up for it!" says Rande Gerber, who actually worked with George to create the agave-based spirit. (No big deal, but Gerber and his wife, Cindy Crawford, are BFFs with the Clooneys.)





READ When Canadian academic Emily Urquhart's first child was born with a shock of white hair, it was the beginning of a terrifying, magical and unexpected journey into raising a child with albinism. In an effort to learn what it means for her daughter to be born without pigment, Urquhart looks at everything from the genetics behind the disorder to the ancient legends surrounding people who have it and what living with albinism looks like today. It's impossible to remain dry-eyed when Urquhart documents her visit to Africa—where children with albinism are routinely murdered—and equally difficult not to fall in love with her enchanting daughter. *Beyond the Pale* is an affecting memoir that is as informative as it is poetic. ☐

TEXT BY SARAH LAING; GETTY IMAGES (*GALAVANT*); ANDREW SOUTHAM (G. CLOONEY & R. GERBER)

SKINCARE BREAKTHROUGH:
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OVERDAY AGING.*

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12 P.M.

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11 P.M.

Skin shows loss of firmness as dermic fluids suffer the effect of gravity.

4 P.M.

Wrinkles become more prominent due to repeated facial contractions.

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[1] Cosmetoclinical study–result obtained on forehead wrinkles.
[2] AC Nielsen, #1 skin care brand in Canadian drugstores, sales in $, TL 2014.

TUNE UP

2015 is the year of the music doc. Here are our top four picks to get the party started. BY SARA CATION

Sometimes we watch music documentaries because we didn't get a chance to see a beloved band live (it's part of our unwritten fan contract); sometimes we watch to learn everything about them. (It's in the "music buff" job description.) But the best music docs are the ones that have an incredible tale to tell (whether or not you've ever heard of the band).

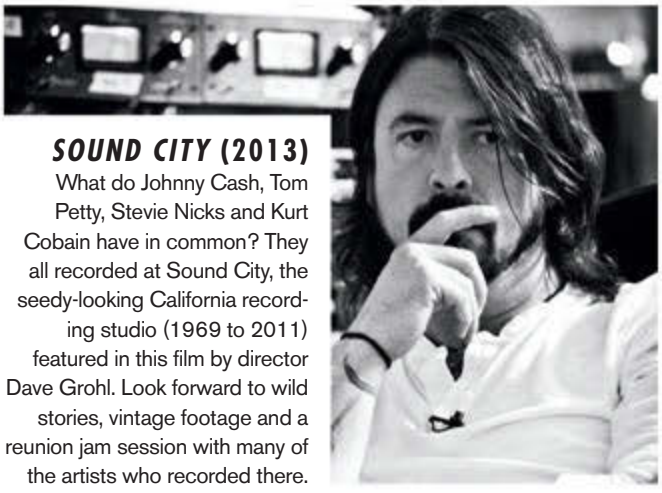
More than 1,500 documentaries are being released this year (according to IMDb), and music is the subject of a lot of them. Critics are already adding the upcoming Nina Simone, Kurt Cobain and Amy Winehouse biopics to their must-see lists, so 2015 is shaping up to be the year of the music doc. Here are some of the best musical stories from the past few years to get you started.



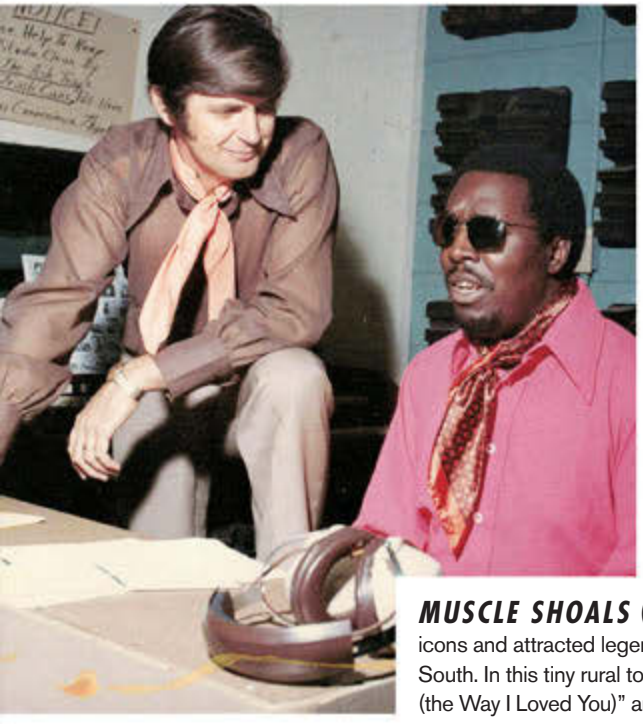
***THE DEVIL AND DANIEL JOHNSTON* (2005)** A portrait of an artist as a madman, *The Devil and Daniel Johnston* is a weird, inspiring and heartbreaking look into the life of the talented yet tormented singer-songwriter Daniel Johnston. Manic-depressive and misunderstood, he stumbles the fine line between striving for fame—with support from Kurt Cobain, who called him "the greatest songwriter on earth"—and falling off the deep end.



***20 FEET FROM STARDOM* (2013)** Winner of the 2014 Oscar for Best Documentary Feature, *20 Feet From Stardom* celebrates the unsung heroes of hit music: backup singers. Through interviews with the likes of Sting, Mick Jagger, Bruce Springsteen and Stevie Wonder, this film explores the stories of those who have made a career out of singing outside the limelight.



***SOUND CITY* (2013)** What do Johnny Cash, Tom Petty, Stevie Nicks and Kurt Cobain have in common? They all recorded at Sound City, the seedy-looking California recording studio (1969 to 2011) featured in this film by director Dave Grohl. Look forward to wild stories, vintage footage and a reunion jam session with many of the artists who recorded there.



***MUSCLE SHOALS* (2013)** This film tells the tale of a small-town music studio that created icons and attracted legends while sketching a portrait of race relations and music in the 1960s Deep South. In this tiny rural town on the Alabama border, Aretha Franklin belted out "I Never Loved a Man (the Way I Loved You)" and the Rolling Stones cut part of their most popular album, *Sticky Fingers*. ☐

GETTY IMAGES



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FRONT & CENTRE

Ellie Kemper prepares to take the lead.

profile

When Tina Fey was creating her new comedy, *Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt*, she did it with one actress in mind: Ellie Kemper. The Netflix show stars Kemper, of *The Office* and *Bridesmaids* fame, as a relentlessly optimistic woman who escapes a subterranean doomsday cult—and then has to figure out how to survive in New York City after living underground for years. (Kimmy's first mistake? Going to work as a nanny for a Manhattan trophy wife played by *30 Rock* alum Jane Krakowski.) Fey's faith in Kemper has already paid off: The series was renewed for a second season well before its premiere this month. Over the phone, the 34-year-old Missouri native talks about life in the spotlight, working with Fey and what it's like being the most adorable woman in Hollywood.

In nearly every profile or interview written about you, the word "adorable" comes up. How do you feel about that particular label? "I think it's a little odd to refer to a 34-year-old woman as adorable, because I feel like that's a term used for babies, puppies and, in general, people who are younger. It's not a rude term, but...."

It's a bit patronizing? "I think that you don't necessarily refer to powerful people as adorable, right? So I'll say that."

I love how every episode has a nugget of wisdom. Often these arrive in little sayings offered by Kimmy, like "You can do anything for 10 seconds." Do you live by any words or sayings? "I'm really into SoulCycle. When you're in an intense interval, they'll say 'You're still up, you're still up.' I actually repeat that to myself when I'm having a hard day. I'm literally blushing as I tell you this, but I think that 'taking it 10 seconds at a time' is deeply profound. You just have to wait for something to pass, and it always does."

You've talked a lot about how great it is to work with Tina Fey. So what we really want to know is...what's the worst part about working with her? "The worst part is probably the best part. Whenever I'm feeling tired, I'll see her on-set and I'll be like 'Oh, this woman has a much heavier workload than any of us and she's always smiling.' It's very inspiring."

Is there any intimidation factor there? "Yeah, she's this cultural icon. I was so nervous around her at first. Luckily, she is so grounded and personable that you stop being nervous. Also, we spent so much time together that I just feel like your system would blow a circuit if you were that tense the whole time. Your body would eventually give in."

How has it been to headline your own show? Are you feeling any pressure? "I am, although I hope to keep it all in perspective. I'm not working in a coal mine or flying bomber planes; I'm working on a television show. Definitely there is more pressure—but on a scale of tough jobs, this is not a hard one."

SARAH LAING

GETTY IMAGES


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FIVE THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT MØ

It's pronounced "moo," and it means "virgin" in Old Norse. Also, her real name is Karen Marie Ørsted, and the addictive pop on her album, *No Mythologies to Follow*, sounds like the love child of Sam Smith and Grimes (which is why we asked her to provide the soundtrack for our Dior-collab videos this month; see page 61). What else do you need to know about the next big Dane in pop?

YOU ALREADY KNOW HER. (YOU JUST DON'T KNOW IT.) Mø is huge in her native Denmark (Breakthrough Artist of the Year at the 2014 Danish Music Awards was just one of three awards she won that night), but you most likely know her for singing the swaggering hook on Iggy Azalea's Billboard Top 40 hit "Beg for It."

SHE'S NO INGENUE, AND THAT'S A GOOD THING. Mø is 26, which is like 65 in pop-star years, and she brings a hard-won sense of self to her new fame. "In the beginning, people were saying 'This is so hot now; you should do it' and I was like 'Maybe.' But I've learned I'm fucking terrible at playing a role. If I know it's not me and I try it anyway, it always fails. I'm bad at faking it!" She has also been around long enough to realize how unlikely her success is: "I never thought I would be rich and famous. I've always known that this is an industry where not a lot of people make it." (Her "backup plan" was "to be an artist, fundraising and living off what [she] can get.")

HER FAVOURITE SPICE GIRL IS MEL C. The Spice Girls were Mø's first musical love. When she got a little older, she moved on to "strong, edgy" role models like Kim Gordon and Karen O and actually spent 10 years on the punk scene, but her goal remained the same: to make music. "I've been dreaming about it since I was seven. You don't dare say your dreams out loud because you're afraid to fail, but, yeah, I want to take over the world!"

SHE MAKES INTENSE EYE CONTACT. Mø writes songs as therapy (mostly about "feeling as confused now as when [she] was 15"), so her lyrics aren't short on drama. "Onstage, I dig into the feelings and go into a more primal, basic state instead of the controlled, social person of daily life. I love looking into the eyes of a stranger and singing right to them."

THE AWARDS AND ACCOLADES ARE GRAVY. Mø says her biggest achievement is being a decent human being: "When I've been working hard and then I go and do a good job in a session, and I'm kind to people even though I'm fucking tired–that's when I'm like 'Karen, you did good there.'" □

THE SCANDINAVIANS ARE COMING

Three more Nordic acts to know.



The Hanged Man
Spooky synth from Sweden by a woman with a flair for the melodramatic.



Cats of Transnistria
A (human) duo from Helsinki do dreamy down-tempo folk.



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* Source: AC Nielsen, period ending January 10, 2015

NOT YOUR ORDINARY GIRL

Aussie transplant Phoebe Tonkin continues to defy definition as she gears up for one of her biggest years yet.

By Justine Cullen Photographs by Beau Grealy

THE PILGRIMAGE TO LOS ANGELES IS A rite of passage for antipodean actors who fantasize about being the next Naomi Watts, Chris Hemsworth or Margot Robbie, but what actually happens when the genetically blessed sell their cars, give up their apartments, say goodbye to their significant others and head across the ocean in search of the American dream?

For many, it's a soul-crushing exercise called "pilot season," where thousands of talented (and not so talented) young things congregate in Hollywood for a punishing ride of audition after audition in the hope of landing a coveted role in a new TV show. Pilot season lasts around three months—the length of time the Visa Waiver Program allows ambitious Aussies to stay in the country. Fail to pick up a gig and you're on the next flight home.

I first met Phoebe Tonkin, who cut her teeth starring in the kids' show *H2O: Just Add Water*, at a dinner party in Australia. She had come straight from the set of the film *Tomorrow When the War Began*. It was just before she headed over to do her first pilot season, and she told me she was worried that casting directors needed to be able to categorize an actress—the wild girl, the sexy girl, the earthy girl, the quirky girl—and she wasn't particularly any of those things. Tonkin recalls the conversation, nodding. "My biggest fear was that I was too ordinary."

As Tonkin neared the end of her L.A. stint, the possibility that that could be true loomed large. "I'd been going for these shows where I was too young to play the doctor and too old to play someone's daughter; I just wasn't fitting into anything," she says. Until her very ▷



Tweed dress and metal bracelet (Chanel)

Silk-organza and stone leaf dress (Chanel). Right: Georgette-crepe shirtdress and leather flats (Chanel)



last audition of the season. "I was so sick of going into all these auditions with my cleavage out, tight skinny jeans and big blown-out hair, which is the staple uniform. I thought, 'I'm just going to go into this one looking like me, all in black and with a bow in my hair,'" she recalls. The audition was with Kevin Williamson, the one-man teen-dream factory who created hit TV shows such as *Dawson's Creek* and *The Following*. "Kevin was the first person to show me that I didn't have to fit into someone's idea of a particular type of girl," she says. "I could be my own person, and someone would find that to be the right thing." Just two days later, she was on a plane to Vancouver to film the fantasy drama *The Secret Circle*, and pilot season, for her at least, had a happy ending.

After *The Secret Circle* wrapped in 2012, Williamson cast Tonkin once again, this time as the werewolf/vampire hybrid Hayley Marshall on the hit teen drama *The Vampire Diaries*. While the part was minor, it eventually led to a starring role in Williamson's popular supernatural spinoff series *The Originals*. Sitting across from her now, five years after that dinner party, it's hard to imagine that Tonkin could ever be thought of as "ordinary." There are those huge anime-like eyes and cut-glass cheekbones; the heartthrob boyfriend, her former ▷



Vampire Diaries co-star Paul Wesley ("He's my best friend. It's such a fun time in my life right now; it's nice to have someone to share all that with"); the new movie—*Take Down*, co-starring *Gossip Girl*'s Ed Westwick—coming out this year; the 1.1 million Instagram followers; and the fact that, with that willowy frame, she has international fashion houses like Chanel courting her to wear their clothes. Not to mention the fact that *The Originals* was recently renewed for a third season, making her that rare creature who is more famous in the United States than at home in Australia. That can't feel all that ordinary, I comment.

Tonkin disagrees. "TV is a lot like having an office job: same crew, same people every day—it's like a family," she says. "I didn't move here to be on a job for three months and then sit around reading scripts and drinking coffee in L.A. the rest of the time. The quality of TV is so great now, and you get to do what you love every day. It's the closest thing to having a normal job." In the normality stakes, it helps that *The Originals* is filmed in Atlanta. "I really love being there. As beautiful as L.A. is, it's so fixated on this industry. It's nice to be in the south, where people have other jobs and you don't feel like you're just talking about movies and directors all the time."

As it turns out, Tonkin is the ultimate modern-day triple threat—actress/fashion darling/blogger—sharing a well-being website, Your Zen Life, with her best friend, Teresa Palmer. "Teresa and I were in L.A., and it felt like we were always hearing girls have all these conversations about weight loss and how they looked, and it was so boring. We really started to get interested in health and wellness as a way to take the pressure away from all that," she explains. Could she be the next Gwyneth? "When we started it, we were both working less; we now realize that it's kind of a full-time job," says Tonkin. "We do want to grow it, but I'm careful because it's easy for two actresses living in L.A. to talk about how great it is to have fresh juice every day but maybe not if you're in some small town.... And I'm conscious of not talking too much about bodies because young girls are so malleable and they read things and take them out of context."

Body image is a hot-button issue for Tonkin, who was recently criticized in the press for being too skinny. "It's definitely the darker side [of fame]," she says. "I think it's really irresponsible for those sites to focus on anyone's body shape. I don't like that I feel I have to be defensive. I really don't even like being part of that conversation."

When I ask whether it's hard for someone as perennially nice as she is to shake off Internet trolls and negative press, Tonkin just shrugs. "I read an interview with Jennifer Lawrence where she said that when she's getting her period, she'll get a glass of wine and sit in front of the computer and type in 'I hate Jennifer Lawrence'; I do that sometimes too," she admits. "It's like, 'All right, come on, how many people are talking shit about me, I can take it....'" It's the sort of psychological self-harm that is surprising for someone who seems to be so incredibly well adjusted. "It's so self-destructive," she agrees. "But I think we're all realizing that women can be complicated and messy and they don't have to be perfect. It's just about balance."

On social media, that balance is clear: Tonkin's refreshing normalcy in person is equally as disarming on Instagram and Twitter. But how much social-media self-censoring goes for celebrities? "It can be hard," she admits. "Someone puts a photo on Instagram and 20 minutes later it's on the Daily Mail and being scrutinized. But I think my Instagram is pretty true to who I am; I'm not hiding anything. I definitely try not to put too much about my personal life, but the other side of that is that I'm 25, and sometimes I'm happy and I want to share photos in the same way that all my other friends who are at university or working in Sydney do."

Her persistence in maintaining a level head in a not-so-ordinary world comes through loud and clear on her Instagram profile, where Tonkin calls herself "Professional Cinderella," a term from one of her favourite movies, *Girl, Interrupted*. "Sometimes this life feels like that," she says. "You do all these amazing things and you work on these incredible sets, you get to get all dressed up and you wear the crystal slippers, and then at midnight it all disappears. You go home and put your pyjamas on and it's just...reality." ❑

BALANCING ACT

Phoebe Tonkin and fellow Aussie actress Teresa Palmer launched Your Zen Life (yourzenlife.com) to inspire young women to live a more mindful and nourishing life free from the distracting messages and images of mainstream media. Here are three key tips to get you started.

"Make a vision board with images that truly inspire you. Set an intention and let your intuition take over. It becomes like a mini-meditation exercise."

"Don't be afraid to ask for help. Share what you're going through with friends, family or a mentor. And remember how good it feels to give all that love back."

"Each day think about how we truly create our own reality. Everything is within your reach."



Suede jacket and pants and metal bracelets (Chanel). For details, see Shopping Guide. Stylist, Romy Frydman; hair, Renya Xydis (The Artist Group); makeup, John McKay (De Facto Inc); manicure, Nettie Davis (The Wall Group)

ELLE CANADA

Join Phoebe Tonkin in our first Instagram take-over on March 21 as she shares a day in her Zen life.



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While attending the 14th annual Whistler Film Festival, Eddie Malter, official makeup artist with L'Oréal Paris Canada, took time away from his busy schedule in the ELLE Canada photo studio to oversee a photo shoot at Lost Lake in Whistler, B.C. Inspired by the great outdoors, Eddie created these two timeless makeup looks, perfect for day or night.

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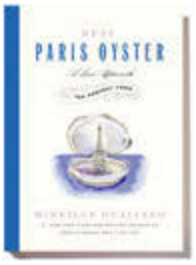


BOTTOMS UP! That champagne you're drinking might actually be making your French-language flirting skills better. A University of Michigan study shows that people given a small (important distinction) amount of alcohol perform better on pronunciation tests in foreign languages than with a placebo. So...*voulez-vous coucher avec moi?*

LOVE IT UP

Decoding the science d'amour.

SAD FACT You know how mac and cheese seems like the panacea to all of life's ills? Turns out comfort food doesn't actually heal a broken heart. According to a new study in *Health Psychology*, it actually has the same effect on a bad mood as no food at all. The jury is still out on green juice and the healing power of self-righteousness.



WE ASKED... MIREILLE GUILIANO ANSWERED

The author of *French Women Don't Get Fat* is back with a sexy new volume, *Meet Paris Oyster. Naturellement*, we had to ask the quintessential Parisienne about love, food and what to cook for a French lover. (Spoiler: It involves butter.)

Q Guillaume and I are hot and heavy right now, but he talks so much about missing French cuisine that I'm worried he's going to leave me for his *maman*'s coq au vin. Help! "Having dated quite a few different nationalities–quite a while ago, I confess–I can guarantee you will impress any man with hanger steak and fingerling potatoes roughly mashed with some good butter. Add boiled *haricots verts* for colour and nutritional balance–*et voilà*."

Q Is it un-French to use Tinder? "You have to fish where the fish are."

Q I get "hangry," and it has ruined a few dates. How can I dine late in the evening like a soignée Parisienne? "Dining in France is as much about conversation and conviviality as good food, so perhaps Frenchwomen just lose themselves while waiting. However, hunger grows, so Frenchwomen eat with their heads. Have something before–maybe a hard-boiled egg or a few tablespoons of yogourt with fruit." ❑

OUI, HE SPEAKS FRENCH!

MOVING ON Newly dumped? Science says that you get over someone faster if you have other potential conquests in mind. A few Gallic suggestions:


Gaspard Ulliel


Paul Pogba


Nicolas Cazalé


François Arnaud


Bradley Cooper

TEXT BY SARAH LAING; THE LICENSING PROJECT (GIRL WITH BOTTLE); ISTOCK (KNIFE & FORK); GETTY IMAGES (G. ULLIEL, P. POGBA, N. CAZALÉ, F. ARNAUD & B. COOPER)



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IT'S COMPLICATED

How Holly Burton laboured over a fear of commitment—and found deliverance.

Sometimes I just like to say the words "When I had my cousin's baby..." and watch people's faces as they run through all the possibilities of this statement—not to torture them, of course, but because I'm grateful to now be able to laugh about it and because that is the simplest way to label the most challenging experience of my life.

When I was 16, my cousin—whom I'll call Susan, to protect her privacy—was diagnosed with a congenital malformation of her reproductive organs that prevented her from ever being able to carry her own child. She was only a year older than me, and we were very close growing up in Niagara, Ont. When we got the news, we consoled ourselves with the knowledge that, thanks to medical technology, her eggs could be implanted in a surrogate; and on that day, my 16-year-old self said I would do it for her. What does anyone know at 16?

Years later, I was 35, living in Toronto and had a lacklustre job as an office assistant that I didn't enjoy. I was contemplating going back to university for the 100th time. I was lost. I had been lost for a long time. I had tried ▷

GEOFFREY ROSS



Christy wears new Lash Sensational™ Full-Fan Effect Mascara in Very Black. ©2015 Maybelline Canada

different jobs and different majors—I had switched six or seven times—and nothing ever felt right. I never hesitated to bail out and start over: I relished constant change and relied on uncertainty to feel exhilarated.

One warm August night, over wine with my sister and another cousin, I learned that Susan was in town. "She just found out that the woman who had volunteered to be her surrogate is unable to do it," said my sister. "Well, I guess my uterus just isn't good enough!" I joked, in reference to my long-ago promise. The conversation moved on.

A few days later, I got a call from my sister. "I was talking with Susan, and I mentioned that you might be interested in being her surrogate," she said. "You two should talk." Dumbfounded, I hung up. I was on a bus on my way home from work. My grip tightened on the metal pole I was using to maintain my balance as my heart palpitated and my mind began to race. "But I was joking! Wasn't I?" I thought. "There is no way I can do this!" I was totally freaked out.

The day the embryo was implanted, I went into shock. The voice inside my head that had first made me feel confident in my choice was now gone.

But by the time I was walking home from my bus stop, my thoughts had evolved. "Could I do this?" I wondered. I called my sister back. "Okay, tell me the worst things about pregnancy and childbirth," I demanded. Having had two kids, she was able to confirm all my preconceived notions of pain, fatigue, swelling, discomfort and lack of sleep. But what scared me the most was the labour. "The pain is excruciating," she admitted. "But it's endurable."

"Do you think I'm capable of doing this?" I finally asked. "I know you are," she said. I thought about it for the rest of the evening. Later that night, I texted my cousin: "So, I hear you need a uterus?"

Two months later, I began the IVF process. I took hormone pills for three months, and then I flew to my cousin's home province on the other side of the country for the final procedure. The day the embryo was implanted, I went into shock. On my flight back to Toronto, it felt like the weight of my decision should have brought the plane to the ground. Even though I didn't know at that point if I was pregnant, the voice inside my head that had first made me feel confident in my choice was now gone.

Two weeks later, when the pregnancy was confirmed, doubt took over and it stayed with me for months. Some days I was just pissed off: at men for producing sperm that do this to women and for not having to go through it themselves, at pregnancy books for referring to the reader as "mommy" and the baby as "your baby," at my shoes for no longer fitting, at sleep for never really coming and at myself for getting into this situation in the first place. I did not understand why I had done it. At one point, I began to feel very afraid. I thought that I was probably going to die doing this because I could not see past the pregnancy, labour and childbirth. I didn't know how this would change me, but I knew that I would never be the same person again. Because of this, I could not see a life for myself beyond the birth—and a part of me accepted that I may not have one. It may sound a little dramatic, but at the time it felt like a very real possibility.

I carried on with my life, but once I started to show, people began to ask about it—and I was always honest with them. When they offered "Congratulations," I would reply, "Thanks, but it's not mine—I'm a surrogate." Until this happened, it had never occurred to me that I had always assumed that if I were to ever be pregnant, it would be because I was madly in love with a charming man and we were doing it together. Being pregnant with someone else's baby—and single—made me feel very alone.

I had a few close friends—and my mom—who listened generously as I let some of this out. (I was able to keep it away from Susan as she lived so far away.) Mostly, though, I kept it to myself and recorded my thoughts in a journal. "It bothers me that everyone keeps saying what a great and beautiful thing it is that I'm doing, what a wonderful gift," I wrote one day. "But I am no saint. I am not that selfless or altruistic, and this whole thing is not wonderful and beautiful. I feel like a liar for not correcting them." Later, when my mom called to check on ▷

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me, she helped me put this (and a lot of other feelings) into perspective. "I always freaked out when I got pregnant," she said (and she's had six kids). "Even when you plan it and want it, it's still a little scary when it actually happens," she explained.

Acceptance of my decision came slowly. What my mind was unable to comprehend, my body, for the most part, seemed to cope with quite easily. I didn't really have an emotional reaction to the baby itself or feel any real connection to it. Having it inside of me was a weird sensation—it was strange to see it moving, but that's it. It sounds kind of cold, but I think I was almost trying to remain a bit distant.

As the pregnancy progressed, I kept myself busy by jogging—something I had been doing for years. I also started doing yoga. Both were instrumental in my life at the time—and still are. I began to accept the fact that I could not bail out of this. It was the first time in my life that I had no choice but to see something through to the end, so I would do it as me, with my own brand of moxie.

I am often asked if it was hard to "give up" the baby, but I don't associate it with that phrase—I don't believe being a surrogate is anything like giving up one's own child.

When I was two weeks overdue, I found out during a Monday-morning doctor's appointment that my water had broken three days prior; my doctor explained that this can happen when the amount of fluid is very small. So, even though I couldn't feel it, I was in labour. As soon as I left the office, I cried. I was terrified.

I went home, quickly packed my things and called Susan, who was staying with a friend about 20 minutes outside of Toronto. Then I ordered a cab. My roommate waved and wished me luck as I drove off.

Even once I got to the hospital, I never really felt like I was in labour—the doctor had to induce me. Still, nothing happened for hours. When things finally started moving, I had an epidural. I'd planned for my best friend, Tiffany, to be in the delivery room with me, but in the end I felt so woozy that I was more comfortable with the help of an amazing nurse.

When the baby came out, the doctor held her up. It was a face I already knew—not because she looked like my cousin but because I felt like I already knew her. I didn't expect that. That's when everything flipped into crystal-clear lucidity. All the unknowns added up to the "why": She was the reason. The nurse asked me if I wanted to hold the baby. "Uh-uh, no way," I said. "This isn't my baby." I felt like I had just gotten someone the best Christmas gift ever and I couldn't wait any longer to share it. I was filled with joy as I watched Susan come in and hold her baby for the first time. Everyone in the room was crying.

I am often asked if it was hard to "give up" the baby, but I don't associate it with that phrase—I don't believe being a surrogate is anything like giving up one's own child. I've never felt a driving force to be a mother the way other women tell me they do, and I don't know if I'll ever have a baby of my own—women have such a limited window of time to have children—but I do feel more open to the possibility now.

Today, almost two and a half years later, I'm still in Toronto, now working as a server in a restaurant. I am slowly and patiently cultivating a relationship with things that I love: I spend a lot of time playing guitar and piano and writing about music for a culture magazine. Instead of always trying to switch things up and do something new, I'm working hard to get better at these things. Last year, I travelled across the United States and Canada and stayed with Susan and her little girl for a few months. It's beautiful to watch my cousin grow as a mother. I don't get to see them very often because they live on the other side of the country, but we do keep in touch and it feels normal. My relationship with Susan's daughter doesn't feel any different from the ones I have with my nieces and nephews. I think this is a good thing.

There were many moments during the pregnancy that made me feel very afraid. But I now think that fear doesn't have to work against us; it can be a force that helps propel us to where we need to be. I've realized that, in spite of myself, I am capable of more than I can even imagine. I guess my 16-year-old self knew a little something after all. ❑

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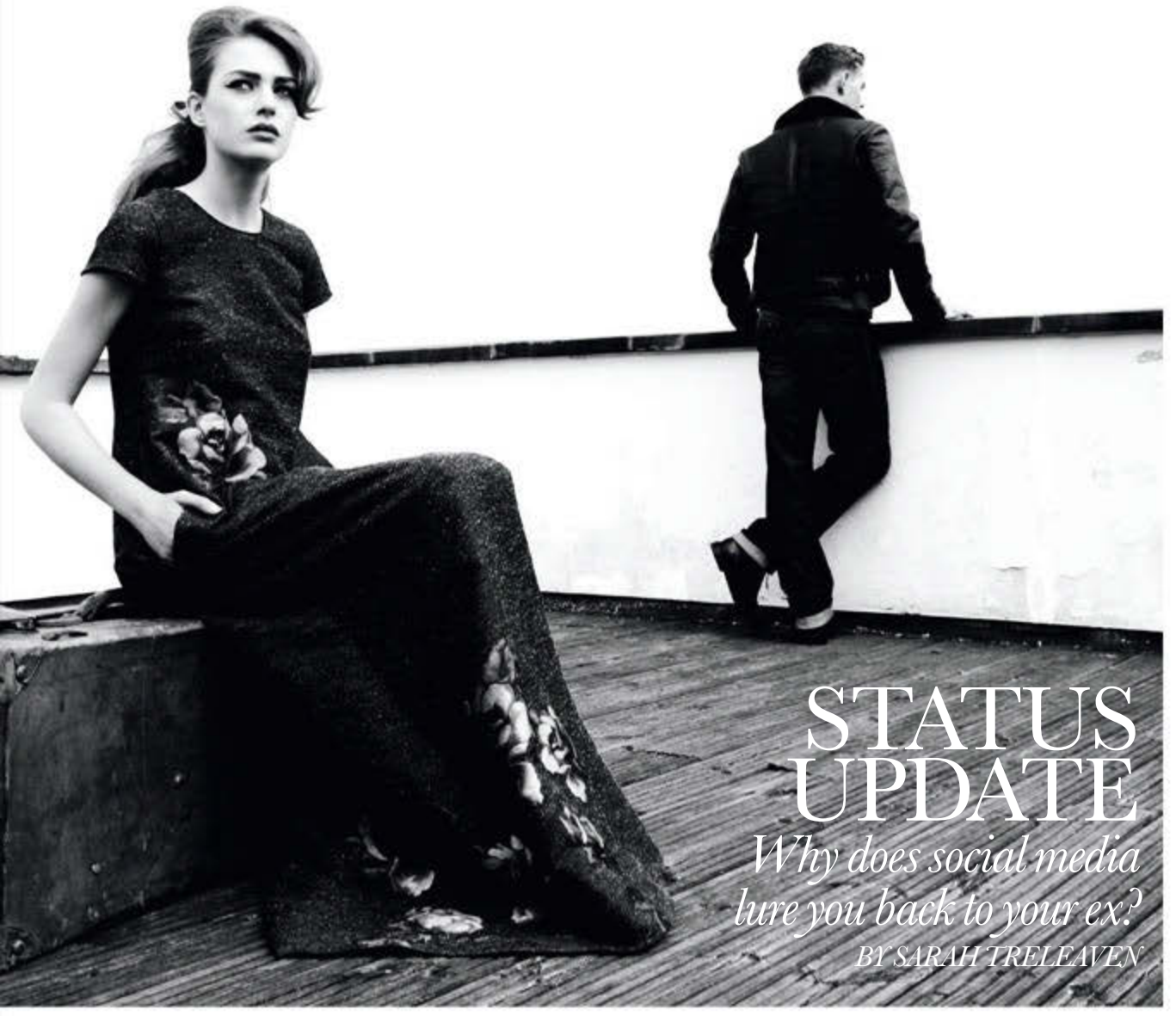
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STATUS UPDATE

Why does social media lure you back to your ex?

BY SARAH TRELEAVEN

The ping of an instant message brought Diana (not her real name), a 35-year-old actress living in Toronto, back together with her ex—two years after they'd first broken up. "He told me how much he had missed me and had wanted to contact me but he'd been respecting my boundaries," she says. After weeks of very intense texting and messaging—sometimes up to 100 messages a day—they were back together. Then they broke up and got back together twice more. But over and over, the issues that broke them up the first time resurfaced. He was still hotly jealous and couldn't make time for her. "It was the same old BS," says Diana, who finally deleted his number and unfriended him on Facebook.

Singer Robin Thicke became the subject of ridicule last summer when he tried to win back his estranged wife, Paula Patton, via tweets and a new album called *Paula*, complete with super-cheesy lyrics: "Come on, baby, let me in / Don't leave me out here in the cold / Ooh, turn the porch light on / At least open the doggy door."(The Twitter campaign #FreePaula ensued.) But he's not the only one who has hoped for a second kick at the relationship can—and professed so via social ▷

JESSIE CRAIG



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media. Justin Bieber and Selena Gomez have been keeping everyone guessing with their suggestive are-they-or-aren't-they tweets since 2010. And, confirming how this phenomenon has captured the cultural zeitgeist, a feature film tentatively entitled *On Again Off Again* was shot in Toronto last year. It's about two twentysomethings who keep getting pushed together and pulled apart—and it's hard to imagine that text messaging and social media will not play a key role.

According to research from the University of Texas at Austin, almost 60 percent of people have gotten back together with an ex—and the average number of times a cyclical couple breaks up and gets back together is 2.5. "Cyclical relationships can be an indication that you're dependent on having someone in order to feel lovable," says Robi Ludwig, a psychotherapist based in New York City who specializes in working with couples. She's also a managing editor for Exaholics.com, a website launched last summer that offers a 12-step program designed to help the lovelorn kick the habit of their previous relationship.

Despite the pervasive drive to rekindle relationships, the University of Texas at Austin studies show that couples who get back together typically experience "less effective conflict management." So why would a renewed relationship that brings lower satisfaction, fewer positive interactions and higher conflict have such appeal?

The driving motivation behind cyclical coupling is a very big question, and the big answer just might lie at the intersection of lingering contact and a perceived lack of desirable alternatives. Cyclical relationships aren't a new phenomenon, but what has changed is this: Social media, increasingly a pervasive part of everyday life, can make the return to a previously warmed bed even more tempting. "We have easier access to people now, which makes it easier to follow through on impulse or curiosity," says Ludwig. Having access to what an ex is now doing—say, through regular Facebook updates—can revive a dormant interest.

It seems like the sometimes-toxic influence of technology and social media—where you can now watch your ex-boyfriend's wedding in real time—is making it harder and harder to say goodbye forever. Brenda Lee, a Ph.D. candidate in psychology at the University of New Brunswick, surveyed young adults aged 18 to 25 and found that 87 percent admitted to post-relationship contact and the tracking of an ex's behaviour.

"It's the norm nowadays to maintain contact with people even after you've broken up," says Rene Dailey, an associate professor of communication studies at the University of Texas at Austin. "That makes it a lot easier to go back to them if you don't have an alternative."

Jacqueline Duke, an Illinois-based consulting psychologist for Exaholics.com, says that the idea of missing out on "the one" can also complicate things. "A lot of people get stuck on this false idea. When we make a final choice to terminate our foreseeable option for love, it can be extremely difficult," she says. Lee's research shows that 42 percent of Canadian young adults thought that a previous relationship would last a lifetime. "When things fall apart, a breakup can trigger serious psychological difficulties, including depression and suicidal thoughts," she says. It's understandable that one might perceive reconciliation as the key to relief. But while the desire to fix something broken is an honourable impulse, it gets tricky when that broken thing is a relationship that's immune to repair.

Duke cautions relationship recyclers to keep their eyes wide open rather than simply indulging a comfortable pattern. Some couples get back together and are able to make positive changes, but one of the biggest red flags is more than one breakup. "You need to pause and think about what you've done during your time apart that will change the wants and needs that weren't being met the first time," she says. Communication, as in all relationships, is very important, and Duke recommends taking a pragmatic approach. "Negotiate things clearly, discuss exactly what is going to change or improve and then keep talking about the ongoing status of the commitment," she says.

ARE THEY OR AREN'T THEY?

Famous on-again, off-again couples—most of whom have finally called it quits.



Robin Thicke & Paula Patton **(QUITS)**



Kristen Stewart & Robert Pattinson **(QUITS)**



Justin Bieber & Selena Gomez **(ON/OFF)**



Ryan Gosling & Eva Mendes **(ON/OFF)**



Katy Perry & John Mayer **(ON?)**

GETTY IMAGES (R. THICKE & P. PATTON, K. STEWART & R. PATTINSON, J. BIEBER & S. GOMEZ, R. GOSLING & E. MENDES, K. PERRY & J. MAYER)

If the relationship is past the point of what should be no return and it's time to call it quits for good, you need to be firm in your decision, says Ludwig. "Once you have ended it, cut off contact and put yourself on a relationship detox—which means no calling, texting or following on social media."

Alexandra (not her real name), a Canadian in her mid-30s living in London, England, found that out the hard way. She returned over and over to a relationship with a clear pattern: Things would hum along, seemingly fine, until her ex would explode over some perceived slight. "He would play on my insecurities, saying that I was cold, that I was always poking fun while he was always complimenting me," she says. They would break up, but soon he would be back on her heels, begging for another chance via text and email. "Then he would say that he didn't really want to break up, that he loved me." They reconciled a total of three times. "And because he played on my insecurities, and I think I'm bad at relationships, I did think it was my fault," she says.

Alexandra's final straw was a late-night showdown on the street in London. "He was really drunk, he swore at me and he sent me loads of awful texts," she says. "Being treated that way made it clear to me that we had to break up for good." She cut him off cold turkey and deleted him from her contacts lists and social networks.

Now, with the benefit of hindsight, the experience of returning over and over to a dysfunctional relationship has given Alexandra context when it comes to future entanglements: "That relationship made me more aware that I should trust my instincts," she says. "I shouldn't have gone along with something that didn't feel right." □

TRY AGAIN?

Four questions to ask before restarting an on-off relationship.

1 **Are you going back to a relationship for the right reasons?** "If the relationship broke up because of circumstances or maturity issues, and not inexcusable behaviour, then it might be worth another try," says Robi Ludwig, a New York-based psychotherapist and managing editor for Exaholics.com. "Don't go back because you're afraid to be alone or you're hoping to change someone."

2 **Is the timing right?** "Sometimes people just aren't ready until they're ready," says Ludwig. "But if you really care and the relationship has some really good qualities, people sometimes need to go back after a timeout and figure out whether this person is really right."

3 **Does this relationship have the right qualities?** "Think about what you want in a relationship," says Ludwig. "Look at relationships you admire, including how those partners treat each other and support each other. Write down those qualities so they are clear. If you're worried or confused, get some feedback from family and friends who really care about you."

4 **Are there any deal breakers?** "Think about what you don't want and figure out your bottom-line deal breakers," says Ludwig. "If any of those exist in the relationship, it's not worth trying again."

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GARNIER



PARENT TRAP

Ease up. Some men are great with kids, but that doesn't mean they're dying to become dads. BY PASHA MALLA

"Do you want kids?"

People ask me this all the time, but it's still a weird question. ("Why?" I want to say. "Do you have some for sale?") But I suppose it's better, and a little more hopeful, than the alternatives: "Don't you *want* kids?" (Subtext: *You monster!*) Or: "No kids for you, huh, weirdo? Probably for the best." Because if you accept procreation as the baseline of human endeavours, then someone in his mid-30s without a litter to cram into a minivan is the cultural equivalent of a lunatic running a marathon in a handstand.

Since I'm not currently in a long-term relationship, and have never been party to a romantic situation in which pregnancy would have inspired anything short of panic, kids aren't really on my mind. Except when they are, which is always, because other people's children are everywhere: riding grocery carts around the supermarket, stealing my seat on the subway, shrieking like caged hyenas for the entire 20-hour flight to New Delhi. (And, you know, they can be adorable and fun sometimes as well.) And once you're in your mid-30s, it's not just strangers' kids who seem ubiquitous—it's your friends' kids too.

Most of my close pals who are parents have cool, smart, terrific children. Not all of them, mind you, but I've ruined friendships by making fun of people's shoes, let alone their progeny, so I'll avoid dwelling on the duds. And no matter how strong the bond of friendship, a chasm often opens between moms, dads and their childless acquaintances once kids enter the picture. Not being invited to a sixth-birthday party sucks, for example, but so does attending said birthday party and lurking purposelessly in the corner while everyone else runs around stopping nosebleeds, luring hyper kids down from the roof and quizzing the potluck providers about shellfish and nuts.

I probably sound like a cranky, youth-hating curmudgeon—the sort to grumble about teenagers' pants (Too tight! Too baggy!) and scowl at families in restaurants over my boiled eggs and beetroot. I do, however, quite like kids. (There are exceptions, though—the little turd who spat at me from a school bus, for example.) I worked at sports camps through my teens and early 20s, taught elementary school for a couple of years and occasionally run writing workshops in high schools. And I think I'm "good with kids," or at least I've been told as much—although it's often followed forlornly by "And you'd be such a great dad!" ▷

GETTY IMAGES


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To ask a man in his mid-30s if he wants kids is begging for a sarcastic response.

These days I make my living as a writer (at home, alone, in a sequence of shame spirals), so I don't interact with many other adults that often, let alone young people. The problem, too, is that a grown man hanging out with children without some institutional context isn't just difficult; it's suspicious—even creepy. Simply typing the words "I like kids" makes me feel that I should offer qualifiers such as "with proper supervision" and "but never in my basement."

The other day I met two kids, a brother and a sister, on the street when I was walking my dog. They enjoyed him so much that they invited us home so they could play with him off-leash. How much fun would that have been—my pooch and I romping around in that goofy, carefree way you can only get away with in the company of children? And these siblings were especially terrific. "Fascinating how dogs smile all the time," pontificated the sister, like a pigtailed Socrates, "and yet our cat just frowns and frowns and frowns." "Our cat," added her brother with a dismayed look, "doesn't remember *anything*."

I was reminded of some of my more cherished and hilarious moments as a teacher—such as the time I asked a six-year-old if his dad drove him to camp in a spaceship and he flew into a blind rage, screaming "It's just a Volvo with a roof rack!" Or another occasion, when my Grade 3s, for lack of a common prayer among their diverse religions, hummed a mournful version of "O Canada" at the funeral for our class gerbil. But, nostalgia aside and regardless of how much these kids liked my dog, I couldn't go back to their house. Imagine coming home from work to a thirtysomething stranger thrashing around the backyard with your eight-year-old daughter. Your first call wouldn't be to the cops; it would be to the mafia to help dump the body of said stranger because you strangled him to death with the garden hose.

As a man, I find it a bit more of a challenge to enjoy day-to-day interactions with young people. If I want to spend time with kids without siring some of my own (or ending up sleeping with the fishes), the easiest answer seems to be taking a job as a food-court Santa Claus. However, that's one yuletide tradition I can't accept: "See that old bearded man hiding under that tree? Go sit on his lap and tell him what to leave behind when he breaks into our house."

To be fair, though, I obviously enjoy privileges that female friends my age do not. If I want to, I can wait until I'm in my 50s (or even older) to have children. But life can be a lonely thing, and the clichés are true: Kids force you to experience things differently, and the ways in which the world unfolds for them in real time is a marvel to behold. So do I want any? I can much more readily imagine having kids *with* someone than being suddenly appointed some children to raise.

To ask a man in his mid-30s if he wants kids is begging for a sarcastic response, if only because it suggests inadequacy—whether personal and painfully relevant or more broadly cultural and alienating. Unless, of course, you're that man's partner, and you're hopelessly in love, and the future stretches out before you like some great unfurling tapestry, and you look into his eyes, and you take his hand in yours, and you ask him, with everything in your soul and heart, "Should we?" ❑

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HEAD GAMES

Is meditation the shortcut to inner peace and the corner office? BY GUY SADDY

I am sitting on the floor. My legs are crossed, and my eyes are closed. In front of me is a small silver tray, and upon it, in a semicircle, are five candles that throw a dancing light against a foot-tall statue of Ganesh, the elephant-headed god revered by Buddhists and Hindus alike. Ganesh is playing the tabla, the tuned Indian drum. Despite this, Ganesh, too, is silent.

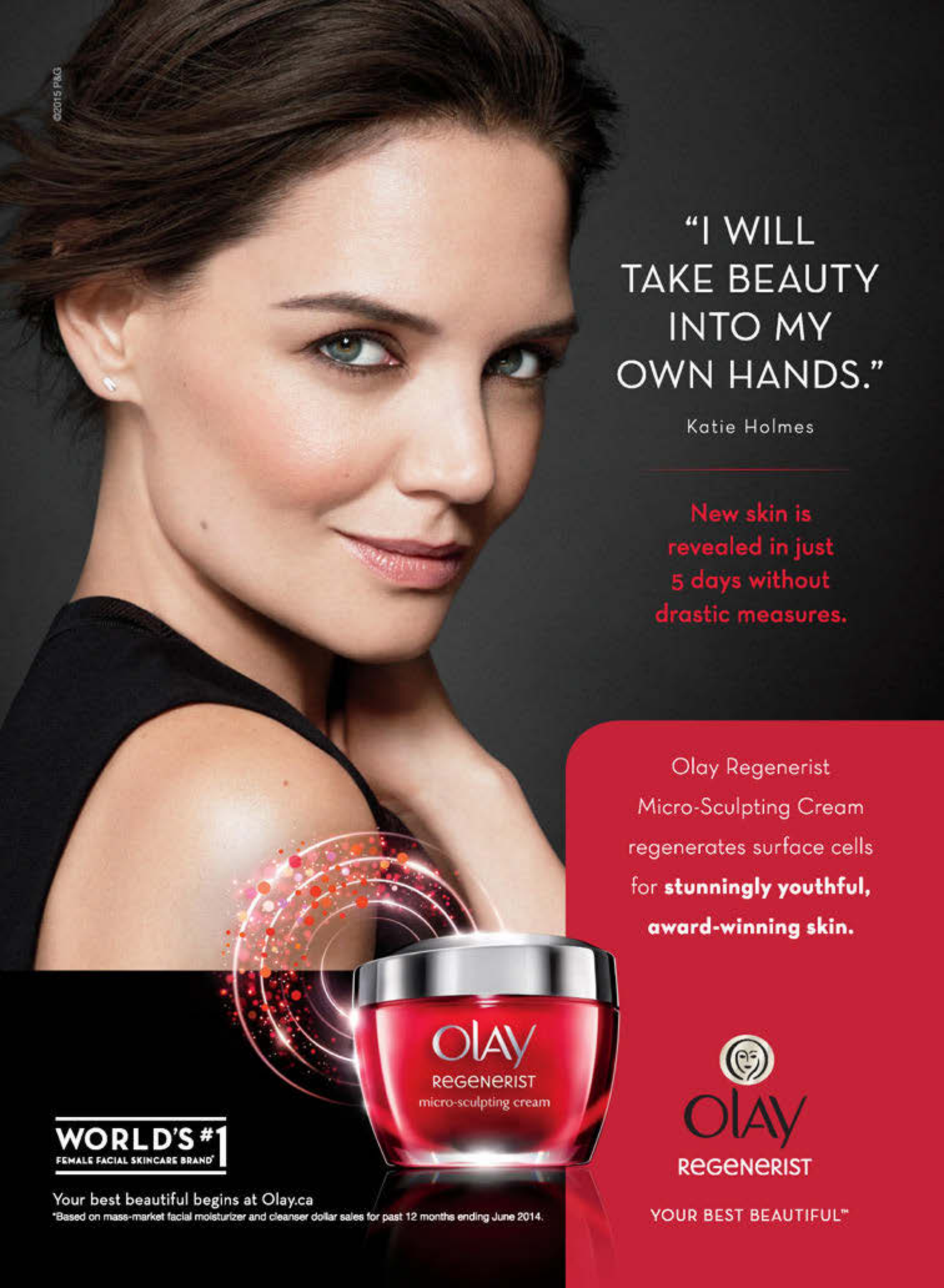
There are six of us here for the daily meditation class at Vancouver's Chopra Yoga Centre. Moments earlier, led by our heavily tattooed, just-got-back-from-Mexico-and-it-was-amazing guide, a one-size-fits-all mantra is dispensed—we are free to use our own—and, upon the chiming of a bell, we begin.

In my mind, my mantra is front and centre. But in my jacket pocket, my business cards are at the ready. See, according to recent hype, meditation may be a shortcut to not only inner peace but also a corner office.

At least that's what a spate of articles would have you believe. Young professionals, we are told, gather at Ziva Meditation's New York City or Los Angeles studio to meditate in groups and network their way to better careers. Suze Yalof Schwartz, a former fashion editor at ELLE U.S., *Vogue* and *Glamour*, has launched Unplug, a drop-in centre conceived of as a sort of "SoulCycle for meditation" in Los Angeles; she counts lawyers, bankers and other Type A careerists among her target market. ▷

ERIC TRAORE

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OLAY REGENERIST

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Meditation groups are apparently the new career-networking hubs. Forget about those crowded bars. Throw away that private-golf-club membership.

And for several years now, Wisdom 2.0, an annual conference that marries technology and mindfulness, has drawn large crowds seeking to inject a bit of bliss into their digitally based lives.

Meditation groups are apparently the new career-networking hubs. Forget about those crowded bars. Throw away that private-golf-club membership. If you want to get ahead, pass the bliss—and throw a non-compete clause into that contract for employment. Call it the shotgun marriage of Dale Carnegie and the Dalai Lama.

Which sounds rather crass, of course. But that's hardly the entire story. "I don't care why people come to meditation; I just care that they come," says Emily Fletcher, 36, the founder of Ziva Meditation and a former Broadway actress who received Vedic meditation training in Rishikesh, India.

Occasionally, admits Fletcher, business connections are made. But most times, career growth is a by-product of meditative practice rather than a direct consequence of, say, sitting cross-legged next to a Wall Street financier or Hollywood film mogul. "It's not 'Oh, I met this person and they gave me a job,'" says Fletcher. "What I hear, more often than not, is 'Emily, I started writing this book that I've been wanting to write for 10 years.' The veil of resistance that plagues so many of us starts to lift once you start meditating."

At one time, meditation had, er, "cultivated" some sketchy optics and seemed destined to be a fad. "Yogic flyers," led in Canada by illusionist/Transcendental Meditation (TM) devotee Doug Henning, attempted liftoff—literal, not spiritual—in 1993 by hopping around cross-legged on national television in a failed attempt to levitate; the Beatles and their entourage, flower garlands wrapped around their necks, hung out at TM founder Maharishi Mahesh Yogi's Himalayan ashram. "I love those boys, but they put my work back 30 years," the controversial spiritual leader reportedly said later. (Charging neophytes $2,500 probably didn't help. TM has since dropped the price.)

Recently, however, meditation has been rebranded, and much of the repositioning has been buttressed by science. Credible studies tout the physiological and psychological benefits of mantra-based meditation, from relieving the symptoms of anxiety and depression to lowering blood pressure and enhancing cognitive abilities and working memory.

Last November, in an overview of extensive recent research, a *Scientific American* cover story entitled "The Neuroscience of Meditation" concluded that meditation has an impact on several regions of the human brain and can "rewire the brain circuits to produce salutary effects not just on the mind and the brain but on the entire body." Other benefits? A calmer, more focused mind—not exactly a bad trait to have when you're trying to make your way in the working world.

Some high-profile practitioners have added lustre, if not necessarily cred. On their way to their 2014 Super Bowl championship win, the Seattle Seahawks' coaching staff promoted meditation as a way of keeping their players' eyes on the ball, so to speak. In his book, *The Way of Baseball: Finding Stillness at 95 MPH*, former Blue Jays slugger Shawn Green credits meditation with helping him achieve 328 career home runs.

Oprah Winfrey, Goldie Hawn, Russell Brand and Lena Dunham are advocates. Even business leaders have embraced the practice, among them hedge-fund billionaire Dan Loeb and Ford Motors' executive chairman, Bill Ford. In January, delegates to the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, crowded into a conference room and, instead of debating macroeconomic theory, meditated silently. And, closer to home, Lululemon founder Chip Wilson launched Whil.com, a meditation initiative promising bliss to business executives who can spare just one solitary minute each day. The motto? "We promise nothing. You achieve everything."

Which sounds pretty good to me. Back at the Chopra centre, as a second bell chimes to end our group session, I'm pretty sure even Ganesh might agree. ▷

Turn to page 164 to learn how to train your brain for a happier life.

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EIGHT DAYS TO BLISS: A MEDITATOR'S JOURNEY

Writer Guy Saddy, an inveterate skeptic, enrolled in zivaMIND, an eight-day online meditation course offered by Ziva Meditation. Here's what he found:

DAY ONE After listening to a 40-minute introductory talk by Emily Fletcher of zivaMIND, I try the first of eight lessons. I'm a little apprehensive, with good reason. "You may not like me very much," Fletcher warned me earlier. Later, over the phone, she explained why: The process of meditating rids the body of stress, which can stir up long-buried emotions. Hmm. I choose one of the three mantras offered, and I begin my first five-minute meditation. It is, indeed, a simple process. Sit quietly, eyes closed, and focus on the mantra. "Don't try to be a perfect meditator," says Fletcher, but that's not easy for a congenital perfectionist. I incorrectly try to push away my racing thoughts through sheer force of will. "We don't want to use the mantra as a baseball bat to knock the thoughts away," she says. Actually, I was hoping for more of an elephant-gun effect.

DAY TWO Good news! "Thoughts are not the enemy." Apparently, I'm not the only one whose brain houses the "drunken monkey"—a term that accurately describes the way stray thoughts jump from topic to topic, like some addled simian crashing from branch to branch. To me, this is distressing (not "de-stressing"), but Fletcher assures me that drifting thoughts that take me away from my mantra are normal; so are thoughts that occur simultaneously. After meditating, I notice that I feel exhausted. Later, I Google my symptoms. Some people excuse it away; others state unequivocally that meditation is always an invigorating process. Translation: I am a terrible meditator.

DAY THREE Excellent news! I am not a failure. Apparently. "Here's a question for you: Are you feeling a bit more energized or are you feeling a bit more tired?" Fletcher asks presciently. "Either way is fine." Phew. It's like she read my drunken-monkey mind.

DAYS FOUR THROUGH SEVEN During this next phase, we transition to 15-minute twice-daily meditations. I'm having trouble fitting in the second session, but since consistency is key to reaping the real benefits, I decide to commit more thoroughly. My lethargy is gone; in its place, however, is a sort of nervousness centred in my stomach area. And this: A few times while meditating, I entered an odd state, very similar to how you feel when you're driving on a highway at night and you almost fall asleep at the wheel. On two occasions, I "jerked" myself back to the present.

DAY EIGHT...AND BEYOND After a few weeks, my nervousness disappeared; this, however, may be due to the fact that I am no longer obsessing over being a perfect meditator—an impossible, and fruitless, pursuit. ("We don't meditate to get good at meditation," says Fletcher. "We meditate to get good at life.") But has meditation helped? It could be a placebo-type effect, but I do feel calmer and more in control. It's as if I were a computer with a somewhat-buggy operating system that has suddenly been upgraded to a smoother, less-flaky iteration. I feel more "solid," for lack of a better word. □

THE VERDICT

I'm going to keep at it. Who knows? Eventually, I may even get good at life.

Beauty beauty Beauty

Gigi's Top 5 Get Gorgeous Tips

We asked YouTube star and beauty aficionado Gigi Gorgeous how she stays looking camera-ready. She gave us her top new must-haves and tips to make sure you're always putting your best face forward:



YouTube Star

1 Whiter Teeth

Most people believe that having a white smile impacts how others perceive them – and I do too! My new favourite beauty secrets for giving my smile added shine are the new Crest® 3D White™ Brilliance Toothpaste and Boost routine. A must try!



Crest® 3D White™ Brilliance toothpaste fights cavities.

2 Lipstick

Depending on my mood, I go for anything from a deep plum to a fun and flirty pink. My favourite lipstick for this season is COVERGIRL® Colourlicious #335 in Tantalize.

3 Mascara

I LOVE mascara! This is my solution for a quick beauty pick-me-up. If I need something to perk up my look and have no time, a good mascara always does the trick.



COVERGIRL® Full Lash Bloom Mascara by LashBlast

4 Foundation

The recipe for a flawless canvas is a good foundation. I like to warm mine up in my hands to make sure it goes on smooth and doesn't give me a cakey look.



COVERGIRL® Ready Set Gorgeous Foundation

5 Make Up Remover

Waking up with a fresh face helps me start fresh for the day! Always be sure to take off your makeup before bed. I use Olay® S'wipe Out Refreshing Makeup Remover wipes before I hit the sheets.



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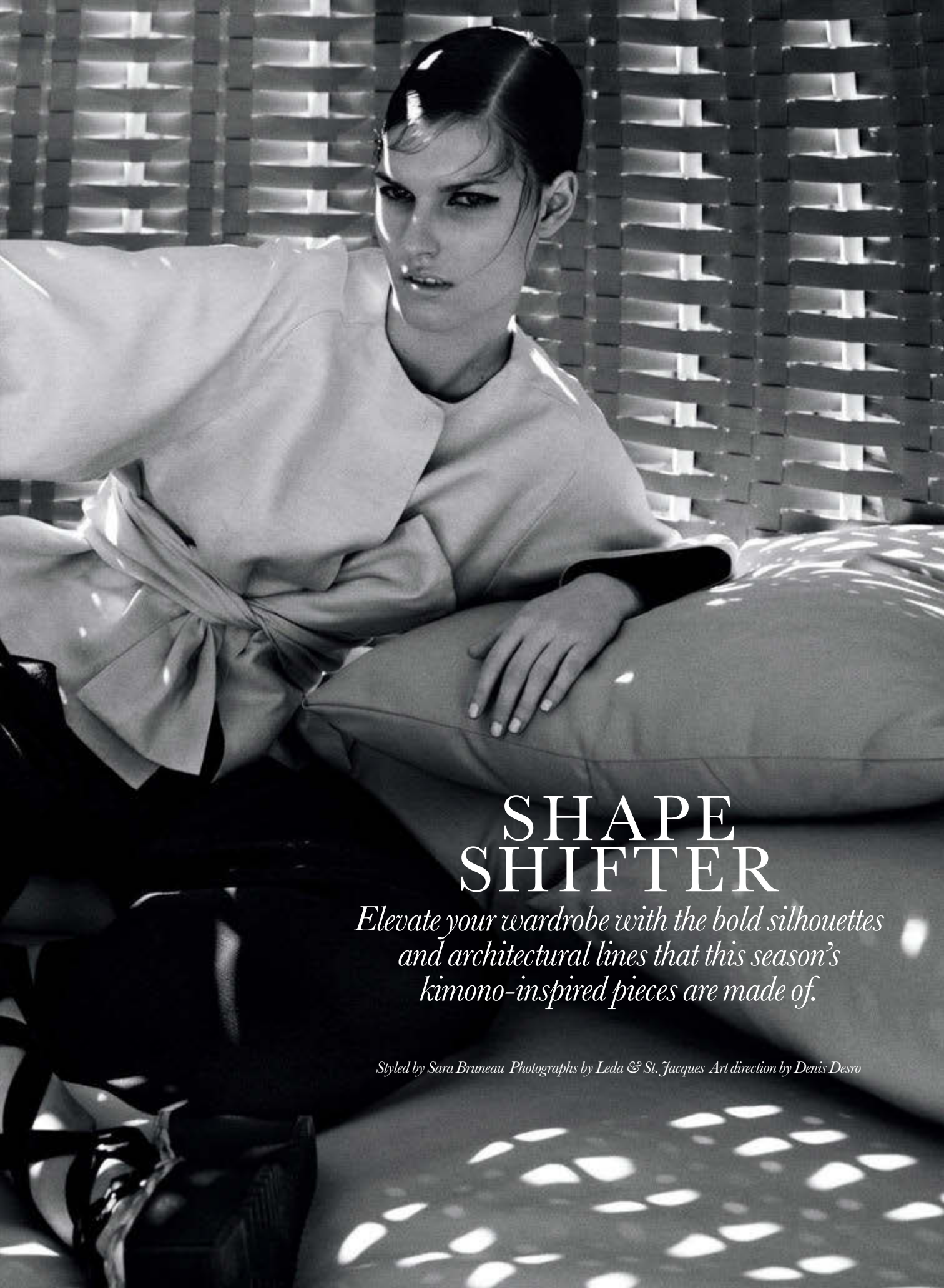
LEDA & ST. JACQUES (MODEL); COTTON KIMONO AND CROPPED PANTS (CLOVER CANYON); COTTON AND SILK BLOUSE (OSKLEN) AND LEATHER PLATFORM SANDALS (MARNI)

IN THE ZONE

Switch up your fashion uniform this season with a serene Japanese-inspired silhouette or glammed-up military wear.



Belted linen jacket, cotton and linen pants and leather and velvet lace-up sandals (Sportmax)



SHAPE SHIFTER

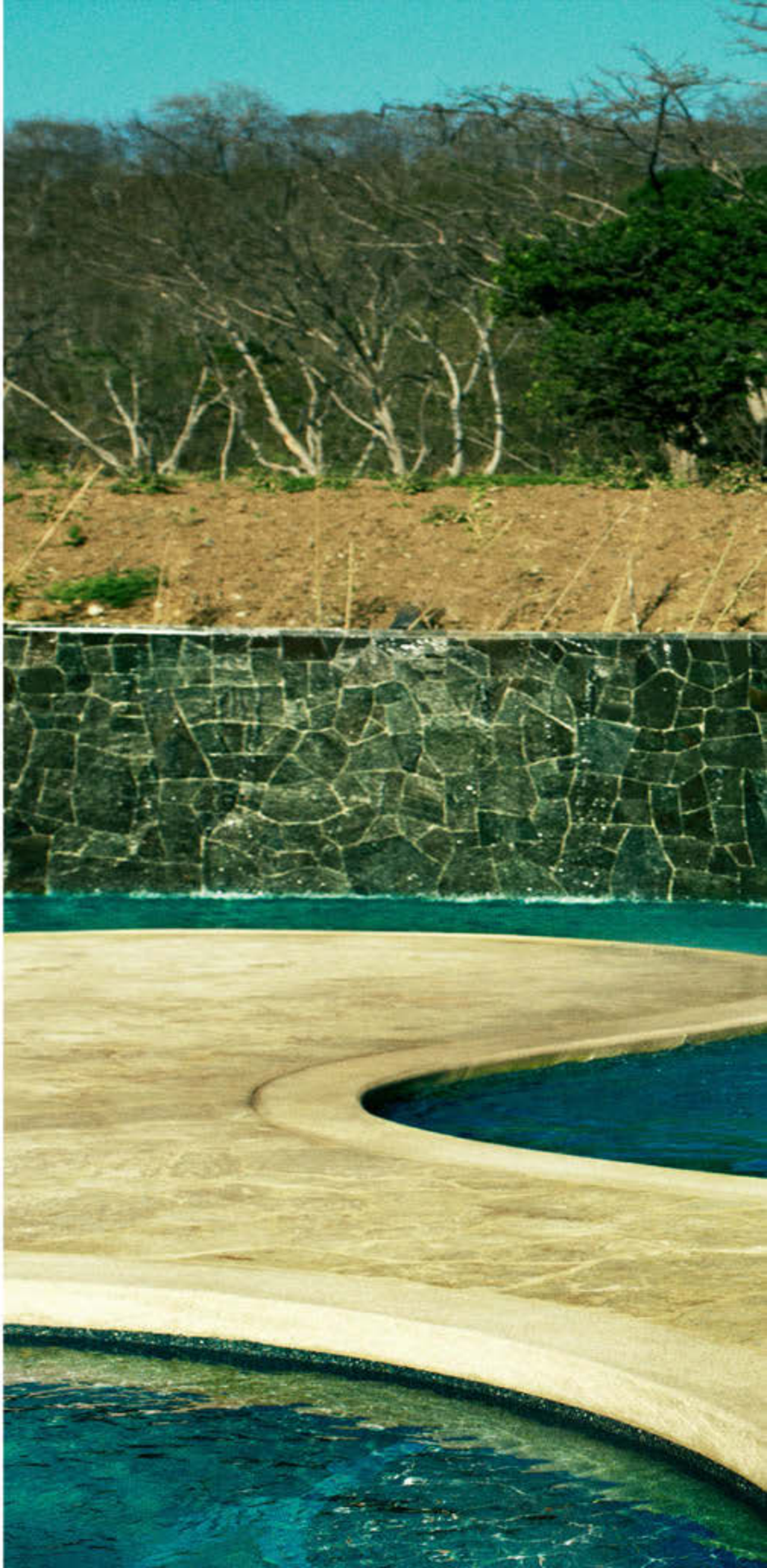
Elevate your wardrobe with the bold silhouettes and architectural lines that this season's kimono-inspired pieces are made of.

Styled by Sara Bruneau Photographs by Leda & St. Jacques Art direction by Denis Desro



Belted silk and cotton dress (3.1 Phillip Lim) and ceramic bracelet (Dinosaur Designs). Right: Silk coat, leather-trimmed silk blouse, pleated leather skirt worn over silk skirt and leather and wood platform sandals (Aquilano.Rimondi) and satin obi (Tavān & Mitto)





Print silk coat (Antonio Marras)
and leather platform sandals (Marni)





Floral silk dress and leather platform sandals (Marni) and silk obi (Tavān & Mitto). Right: Knit kimono-style dress (Hervé Léger by Max Azria), striped silk obi (Tavān & Mitto), cotton judo belt (Kontact Sports) and horn bangle (Dandi Maestre)





Print cotton vest and silk-chiffon maxidress (BCBGMAXAZRIA) and leather and wood platform sandals (Aquilano.Rimondi). For details, see Shopping Guide. Model, Erin (Elite Toronto); hair & makeup, Paco Puertas (Folio/TRESemmé/M.A.C), using Clarins suncare products; stylist's assistant, Linny Alexa Ganten; digital technician, Yanive Nizard; photographer's assistant, Don Loga. *We would like to thank Air Transat (airtransat.ca), Nolitours (nolitours.com), Dreams Las Mareas Costa Rica Resort & Spa and the Costa Rica Tourism Board.*





Cotton shirt (Hugo Boss), cotton skirt (Nicholas K), ribbed-cotton belt (Army Surplus) and leather platform sandals (Sacai). Right: Embroidered cotton blazer (Helmer) and metal and crystal-bead drop earrings (Rita Tesolin)



READY FOR ACTION

Why so serious? Military dressing goes glam with embroidered detailing, sequins and a whole lot of attitude. It's time to step out of line.

Styled by Sara Bruneau Photographs by Nelson Simoneau Art direction by Denis Desro



Cotton shirt (Diesel), nylon and spandex briefs (American Apparel) and metal safety-pin necklace (UNTTLD)



Sequined cotton parka and top, beaded cotton skirt and leather lace-up boots (Rodarte)



Cotton and lace trench (Sacai), nylon and spandex briefs (American Apparel), cotton belt (Army Surplus) and satin and rubber slides (Marc Jacobs)





Cotton band jacket and flared cotton jeans (Gucci) and metal bracelets (Robert Lee Morris and Made)



Leather shirt (Denis Gagnon), cropped silk pants (Nicholas K), leather belt (Victoria Simes), metal and crystal-bead drop earrings (Rita Tesolin) and metal cuff bracelet (Diesel)



Nylon and cotton anorak (G-Star), silk-tulle dress (Burberry Prorsum), cotton belt (Army Surplus), metal bracelets (Robert Lee Morris and Made) and brass ring (Made)



Cotton shirt and skirt (Marc Jacobs), metal bracelets (Robert Lee Morris and Made) and leather and rubber platforms (Diesel). For details, see Shopping Guide. Model, Ashley Foo (Sutherland Models); hair & makeup, Nicholas Blanchet (Folio/TRESemmé/M.A.C); stylist's assistant, Linny Alexa Ganten; digital technician, Stéphane Losq; photographer's assistant, Gabriel Paquet. Canvas backdrop, Boris Arsenault

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[1] Efficacy clinical studies performed with *Polygonum aviculare* extract on 28 subjects.

ELLE BEAUTY

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EDITOR'S POV This month, we focus on the latest anti-aging breakthroughs. (The beauty department's approach to fighting aging? It ranges from "gentle discussion" to "reality-TV-style chair toss.") But we also have a feature about a new sunscreen innovation. You can't acknowledge one without the other—prevention is the best approach if you want to have beautiful, healthy skin. Spring may have only just arrived, but confronting skin damage is a daily war I intend to win. *Vive la résistance!* **VANESSA CRAFT**

IMAXTREE (MODEL); GEOFFREY ROSS (PRODUCTS)



Did you know? With age your hair can lose essential nutrients and become more coarse, dull and can appear thinner. That is why Dove Advanced Hair Series created the new Vitality Rejuvenated range. It is a specifically designed ritual for aging hair. Formulated with proteins and collagen, it nourishes and replenishes essential nutrients lost with age. Unveil thicker looking hair, full of vitality.

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MAMMA MIA It's New York-based DJ Mia Moretti's job to get everyone from fashion editors to former presidents dancing, so who better to design makeup you can move in? Between gigs, Moretti teamed up with M.A.C to create an original collection of music-festival-ready makeup that hits shelves in April–just in time for Coachella. From left: M.A.C Mia Moretti Lipstick in Mia Moretti ($19); M.A.C Mia Moretti Cream Colour Base in Desert Roadtrip ($25); M.A.C Mia Moretti Casual Colour Lip & Cheek Colour in PS I Like You ($26)

LATEST & GREATEST

BEAUTY BUZZ

This month's new and noteworthy must-haves.



CAROLINA HERRERA

ALEXANDER MCQUEEN

ISSEY MIYAKE

EASTERN TIME

Japanese influences were spotted at top spring/summer 2015 shows. At Carolina Herrera, Orlando Pita created shellacked loops of hair that he called a "sumo knot." At Issey Miyake, Eugene Souleiman created a floating bob structured "like a three-dimensional cubist kind of origami." And at Alexander McQueen, Guido Palau folded models' hair into a sumo-bun-style chignon. Boost shine and secure all your hard work with Redken Hardwear 16 Gel ($18).



Chanel No. 5 Eau de Parfum Spray ($368 for 30 mL). For details, see Shopping Guide.

SONIC BLOOM

In Grasse, France, there lies a field of roses that bloom only for the month of May. The "rose de Mai" has a posh calling card: It's the heart of Chanel No. 5, created by Ernest Beaux in 1921. To celebrate the elegant floral, ELLE Canada asked Jacques Polge, adviser to the Chanel fragrance laboratory, about memory, mystery and inspiration.

What is the enduring appeal of Chanel No. 5? "It was the first couture fragrance. No. 5 mixes flowers in a way that you do not recognize anything. There is mystery, and mystery is very important for seduction." **When did you first come across No. 5?** "When I was learning how to be a nose. There was a period when, like a painter, you learn a job by imitating ancient works. I tried to redo the big and very famous perfumes, and I remember that I had some difficulty reproducing No. 5. I now know why." **What attracted you to fragrance?** "Fragrance is a way of expressing and saying things without choosing words or images. It says things that you couldn't say in any other way." **What inspires you?** "For Coco, my inspiration came from my first impression of Mademoiselle Chanel's apartment. With Chance, marketing wanted a perfume for younger people, which I didn't think was a good idea because young people don't have money. Instead, I [created] Chanel's youngest perfume." **How has fragrance evolved?** "The principles have not changed. You try to do the best you can; each fragrance has to be different from what Chanel already has, and it has to be different from what is already on the market. These principles were true at the time, and they are still true today." **LAURA deCARUFEL**

TEXT BY VICTORIA DIPLACIDO & KATHERINE FLEMMING; GEOFFREY ROSS (M.A.C PRODUCTS); IMAXTREE (RUNWAY)

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*vs. flat, limp hair
**vs non-conditioning shampoo



EDITORS' PICKS

LUST LIST

What we're coveting this month.

DISCO INFERNO
This is a seriously shimmery metallic shadow—the shy need not apply. Essence Metal Glam Eyeshadow in Sugar Mint Candy ($3.50)

DOUBLE TAKE
Up the (beauty) ante with an unexpected mascara. Make sure to layer: It's go big or go home with this colour. Hard Candy 1000 Lashes Mascara in Mermaid ($6). For details, see Shopping Guide.

DON'T WAIT—HYDRATE
The end of winter is near. In the meantime, this argan-oil and shea-butter moisturizer will soothe even the driest skin. Moroccanoil Fleur de Rose Body Soufflé ($52)

SEA ME
Start prepping for perfectly tousled, beach-worthy hair while you're still in the shower with John Frieda Beach Blonde Smooth Seas Detangling Conditioner ($11).

TAKING SIDES
This one-size-fits-all face cream conquers both dry and oily skin. Éminence Balancing Moisturizer Duo Green Tea T-Zone Mattifier & Pomelo Cheek Hydrator ($68)

WATERWORKS
This water-based hair wax contains mica and essential oils to moisturize and condition as it holds. Hanz de Fuko Hybridized Wax ($22)

LITE-BRITE
This polish does double duty as a bold wash of colour that also helps to strengthen nails. Trind Caring Color Nail Lacquer in Minty Moijito ($13)

DOWN UNDER
Plankton and artichoke extracts work to calm and re-energize skin. Darphin Paris Exquisâge Beauty Revealing Serum ($165)

BLUE IVY
Leave black liner behind for a day and rim your eyes in a decidedly peppier colour. Aveda Petal Essence Eye Definer in Tidepool ($20)

TEXT BY VICTORIA DIPLACIDO; GEOFFREY ROSS



†For best results, use as directed for 4 weeks. Simulated teeth whitening on model. Fights cavities.
Colgate-Palmolive Canada Inc. *TM Reg'd/M.D.

NEW AND IMPROVED

Growing old gracefully or fighting it every step of the way: There's a product for that.



TRY NeoStrata Smoothing Cream ($39); Neutrogena Rapid Wrinkle Repair Serum ($30). For details, see Shopping Guide.

BEAUTY BASICS *Collagen and elastin...why should you care?*

Think of collagen (which lives in the dermis, the deeper part of the skin) as the stuffing in a mattress and elastin as the springs. A new mattress is young and taut (see: your eight-year-old niece's face). When damage occurs, the mattress begins to sag and deflate. What's the best way to get your bounce back? Use retinol, which is one of the few ingredients that can actually help build collagen. Laser treatments and chemical exfoliants, like alpha-hydroxy acids, also help get skin reminiscing about the good old days. ▷

TEXT BY VANESSA CRAFT & VICTORIA DIPLACIDO; ERIC TRAORE (MODEL)


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TRY StriVectin Intensive Illuminating Serum ($99)

DERM DATE

Some things are best left to the professionals.

LASER QUEST Traditional resurfacing lasers are great at targeting wrinkles, but downtime can last three months. At DLK on Avenue, Dr. Lisa Kellett's Laser Peel (from $500) uses modified ProFractional and ResurFX lasers that operate at a lower frequency, reducing recovery time to only about two or three days—the same as a typical chemical peel. "Instead of doing a traditional skin peel with acids, we use the laser, which heats the skin," says the Toronto-based dermatologist. Though the treatments have comparable downtimes, the heat from the laser peel helps to produce collagen—one of the building blocks of flawless-looking skin.

FREEZE-FRAME Even as effective new professional and topical anti-aging treatments come to market, Botox and fillers are still going strong. "They are the gold standard in non-invasive treatments," says Dr. Fredric Brandt, a New York-based dermatologist, of their enduring popularity, not least because they can be used to restore volume and structure to the face. Docs in the know are using Botox to contour the face by injecting it into the masseter muscle, which relaxes a tense jawline and emphasizes cheekbones. London-based Dr. Michael Prager is anti-"big pillow cheeks and expressionless faces" and a specialist when it comes to using Botox in the lower half of the face because if this area sags, it ages the face more than any forehead wrinkle. "Injecting Botox into the jaw will stop the muscle movement that pulls cheeks down," he says. Prager also doesn't advocate the one-size-fits-all approach to Botox: "When it's not done right, you look different, not necessarily younger."

HOMEWARD BOUND Professional anti-aging treatments are not substitutes for daily preventive care. Dr. Macrene Alexiades, a dermatologist based in New York, likens professional laser treatments to going to the dentist to get your teeth deep-cleaned—for good-looking teeth, you still need to brush them every day. "I tell all my patients that lasers are not going to work on their own," she says. "Post-procedure, you need to feed the skin in order to maximize the results. If you stimulate stem cells with a treatment but they don't have the raw materials for synthesizing collagen, you won't see results." Alexiades recommends the daily use of an anti-aging product that contains amino acids, collagen cofactors and a high concentration of organic peptides. "I believe that using a good anti-aging product every day, twice a day, at home is superior to doing procedures every so often," she says. Duly noted.

FACE FRIENDS



Skin looks bright and hydrated thanks to this pearl-extract and aloe-vera-rich mask. Racinne Ultimate Aqua Blanc Brightening Mask ($33). For details, see Shopping Guide.



The black-diamond-truffle extract in this luxe cream takes 10,000 hours to create from start to finish. Estée Lauder Re-Nutriv Ultimate Diamond Transformative Energy Cream ($385)



Take a three-pronged approach (lighten, exfoliate and soothe) to fighting dark spots with Sisley Intensive Dark Spot Corrector ($185). ▷

STOP WORRYING ABOUT WRINKLES! This advice may sound ironic in a feature that is focused on anti-aging, but hear us out: Studies show that people see skin discoloration as a much bigger indicator of age than wrinkles. Prevent brown spots or rough-textured skin with a broad-spectrum sunscreen, and fight hyperpigmentation with in-office laser treatments.

GEOFFREY ROSS (SISLEY INTENSIVE DARK SPOT CORRECTOR); ERIC TRAORE


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Prager uses SkinCeuticals C E Ferulic ($165) for his Red Carpet Facial.

SHH! VANESSA CRAFT'S PRE-PARTY SECRET WEAPON

Sometimes the best defence is a good offence. Just ask Dr. Michael Prager, who specializes in discreet and effective treatments that leave you with supermodel-like skin. When I'm in London, I make room in my schedule to hit up this esteemed doc's West End office for his legendary Red Carpet Facial.

WHAT IT IS A combination of a chemical peel, mesotherapy (when vitamins and hyaluronic acid are massaged into the skin with an electronic device that makes your face jump around) and microderm rolling. Microderm rolling, or needling, is when a spiked ball is rolled across your face, creating numerous tiny injuries to the skin that cause it to create new damage-fighting cells. It is said to work on everything from stretch marks to wrinkles.

PAIN FACTOR The face-jumping electric current during mesotherapy feels weird, and the dermaroller straight-up hurts. Even with a numbing cream, I used every deep-breathing-slash-Channing Tatum-fantasy scenario to survive those few minutes.

RECOVERY FACTOR Redness, but nothing that can't be hidden with makeup.

RESULTS Incredible—no kidding. The last time I had this facial, even though I was jet-lagged and exhausted, I was stopped and questioned by the immigration officer at customs on my way home; she refused to believe the age on my passport. #deathbedmemory.

BLAST-OFF

STUDIES SHOW THAT LASER-TREATED SKIN ABSORBS UP TO FOUR TIMES MORE PRODUCT THAN IF IT WERE LEFT UNTREATED. ZAP SKIN WITH THE TRIA BEAUTY AGE-DEFYING LASER AND THEN FOLLOW UP WITH ITS VITAMIN-C- AND HYALURONIC-ACID-ENRICHED CREAMS FOR A PROFESSIONAL-GRADE EXPERIENCE IN YOUR HUMBLE BATHROOM.



From left: Tria Beauty Age-Defying Laser ($569); Tria Beauty Overnight Brightening Boost Facial ($75); Tria Beauty Super C Brightening Moisturizer ($65). For details, see Shopping Guide.



AND NOW THIS Eschew all previously mentioned products and treatments for this latest anti-aging trend: Prevent wrinkles by...not moving your face. (Apparently Victoria Beckham and Kim K. are practitioners; they limit smiling to their eyes.) Before you commit, consider: To perform this method, you must withhold reactions to scenarios including, but not limited to, Justin Bieber's decision to dye his hair bleach blond, a chance encounter with Brad Pitt and discovering that your fave facialist has quit without leaving any contact information. Best of luck! ☐



A host of peptides work together to boost the collagen-supporting skin cells, reducing the length and depth of wrinkles. La Prairie Anti-Aging Rapid Response Booster ($335)



Glycolic, lactic and citric acids buff away dull skin so you wake up looking (pretty close to) poreless. Pro-X by Olay Anti-Aging Nightly Purifying Micro-Peel ($40)



This cream packs 50 potent anti-aging ingredients, like resveratrol and ferulic acid. Dr. Macrene 37 Extreme Actives High Performance Anti-Aging Cream ($244)

GEOFFREY ROSS (TRIA & SKINCEUTICALS PRODUCTS); GETTY IMAGES (K. KARDASHIAN)

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MARNI

ALEXANDER MCQUEEN

ATSURO TAYAMA

DON'T MISS IT!

1.
The most stylish spring 2015 looks to get you through those April showers.

2.
Everything new you need to know about aging.

3.
We round up our fave Canadian music in celebration of the Juno Awards this month. #GreatWhiteNorth

IMAXTREE (RUNWAY), ITSOCK (WATER COLOUR)

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For extended interviews with the Victoria's Secret models, visit **ELLECanada.com/beauty**.

NEW GLAM

Picture the Victoria's Secret beauty aesthetic: An impossibly leggy glamazon emerges from a cloud of glitter, her lithe limbs coated in a rich layer of bronzer. Her hair is gloriously long, with Kardashian-like waves swishing past sculpted obliques. But this year they tweaked the bombshell look—and ELLE Canada went to London, England, to investigate the brand's latest head-turning allure.





"In the past, Victoria's Secret's makeup has been quite bronze and golden," said makeup artist Dick Page, who prepped the models for the show. But this year, the key product was a red theatrical face paint. "This flush of colour on the cheeks symbolizes the energy in the face," explained Page. He applied the red pigment to cheeks and then lightly buffed bronzer overtop. Then he applied taupe shadow, brownish-black liner and mascara to eyes. To keep the brand's signature neutral lip from looking "too flat or too dead," Page mixed a nude lipgloss with the rosy-hued Victoria's Secret Beauty Rush Lip Stain in Endless Pink ($10).



Lead hairstylist Akki Shirakawa said the hair should look "chic, wearable and easy." Extensions were obvs on hand, but they were used to create volume, not extra length. Shirakawa massaged Victoria's Secret Mega-Lift Mousse ($18) through damp roots before blow-drying and creating "bends." He then set the hair in large rollers and, right before showtime, removed them and shook up the hair for a bed-head effect, misting it with Victoria's Secret Hair Weightless Hair Oil ($18).



GET THE LOOK Victoria's Secret Exfoliate Body Prep Smoothing Scrub ($22); Instant Bronzing Tinted Shimmer Lotion ($18); Beauty Rush Lip Stain in Endless Pink ($10); Weightless Hair Oil ($18). For details, see Shopping Guide.

BEAUTY BULLETIN FROM THE V.S. GIRLS



JOURDAN DUNN

"Always take off your makeup before going to bed. And I love those sheet masks! I used one this morning because I went out last night; I felt great and ready for the show."



JOAN SMALLS

"The best accessory you can wear [on the runway] is a smile. I like to decompress by taking a long shower with really hot water—so it's like a steam."



KARLIE KLOSS

"I try to wear as little makeup as possible on days off. If I need a bit of coverage, I usually apply a BB cream and run out the door. When I'm flying, I just wear a lot of moisturizer."



GRACE MAHARY

"Rooibos tea is my skincare secret. I love drinking it! The three things I can't live without are my phone, my family and my blow-dryer. When it comes to hair, less is more."

TEXT BY KATHERINE FLEMMING; GETTY IMAGES (TOP IMAGE, B. PRINSLOO, J. DUNN AND J. SMALLS & K. KLOSS); TOM CONCORDIA (J. DUNN, J. SMALLS, K. KLOSS & G. MAHARY ON RUNWAY)


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Clockwise, from bottom left: Views of the flagship Dessange salon in Paris; the signature *coiffé-décoiffé* that Jacques Dessange created in the '60s; inside the hair spa; a scene from the Dessange Show Prestige annual hair event; Noreen with salon manager Jason le Carrour

FRENCH TOUCH

Dessange's hair spa is heaven-sent. BY NOREEN FLANAGAN

"Sorry. Can't respond. Am too busy SEETHING WITH EXTREME HAIR JEALOUSY." It's not often that I get this kind of email from our beauty director, Vanessa Craft. I had taken a day off from covering the spring/summer collections in Paris to spend time at the Dessange hair spa, and I needed to confess an all-too-common beauty sin: I had just engaged in a tonsorial tryst, and if there was one woman who would understand that turn of events, it was Vanessa.

Jason le Carrour had me the moment I walked into the flagship Dessange salon. I arrived feeling distracted and embarrassed because the strap on my Pierre Hardy shoe had just broken. Should I fess up to my problem or try to gracefully shuffle my way through the day? Jason, who had noticed I was having a quiet meltdown, discreetly asked me to remove my shoes and handed me some flip-flops. He then arranged with my host from L'Oréal Paris to have my shoe repaired. As the salon manager, he's clearly a pro at handling such ▷


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They don't come with Jason, but the at-home products (Salon Color Restore, Solar Blonde Naturale, Oleo Miracle and California Blonde collections) can help you recreate some of the Dessange experience. The 14-piece range sells for $13 to $14 each (at Shoppers Drug Mart, shoppersdrugmart.ca).

fashion emergencies. "Come with me," he said. "I'll show you the salon and then take you to the hair spa for a treatment."

The "spa" is an oasis in a separate area at the back of the salon. I took a seat, and Jason gently rested his hands on my shoulders. "Now, let's talk about your hair," he said in a serious, empathetic tone that made me think I could tell him all my troubles and he would kindly listen. "I will also make a proposition about what we can do with your cut and colour," he told me. "You know what they say: Men propose, and women decide whether to accept." I hadn't planned on getting my hair cut, and I told him I felt a little guilty about being unfaithful to Victor, who has been my Toronto hairstylist for 15-plus years. "You mean you've never had your hair cut by a Frenchman?" he asked incredulously, as if this were a beauty rite of passage I had been denied. "No, you'd be my first," I replied, feeling a little flushed. "It is good to have someone look at you with fresh eyes and see something in you that may have been forgotten or missed," said Jason. "He will understand."

After examining my hair, Jason applied a custom-blended mix of essential oils to my scalp and began the most heavenly 30-minute head massage. "Your scalp is stiff," he said. "You're stressed. We'll work on that." After the massage, Jason left for a moment to mix a bespoke "care treatment" based on his analysis of my scalp and hair. "We don't call it shampoo," he said. "It's more than that. It's a unique mix of essential oils and minerals from the Dessange salon line." I then floated over to the shampoo station (or altar) and sat down on the white leather lounger connected to the sink. "This isn't a chair; it's an experience," said Jason. "Lie back and enjoy." The "chair" did indeed come to life, gently giving me a shiatsu-like neck-to-toe massage. Now that I had told Jason my life story, I wanted to hear his. "Really?" he said, as he started washing my hair. "Yes," I encouraged him. "Start by telling me when you knew you wanted to be a hairstylist." He smiled and then began to recount a charming tale about growing up in a village in Brittany and knowing, at age seven, that hair was going to be his life's work. His father—a fisherman—was puzzled by his son's intentions, but his mother understood, said Jason. One Christmas, he begged his parents to buy him a Barbie so that he could do her hair. "I spotted this beautiful box under the tree, and I was so sure it was going to be my doll," he recalled. "I opened it and burst into tears. My father had agreed to get me a doll—but it was a Ken doll with plastic hair! I said 'You don't understand that I want a doll with hair because I want to be a hairdresser!' Days later, my mother came home with a Barbie Styling Head and makeup kit. I said 'Bye-bye, Ken' and became the master of hair in the neighbourhood."

At 15, Jason landed his first job at a Dessange salon near his home, and he has been with the company ever since. "It's a beautiful task to make someone feel happy," he said. "I've been doing it for 35 years, and it's still amazing." What followed was also rather amazing. Instead of rinsing the conditioner—I mean "care treatment"—from my hair, Jason filled a blue glass vase with water from a bubbling glass cauldron located beside the sink. The water, which is "purified and distilled," is kept at room temperature and removes impurities and ensures that the shaft of the hair lies flat. "Do you know that scene in *Out of Africa* where Robert Redford is washing Meryl Streep's hair by the river?" Jason asked me. "This reminds me of that. It's beautiful, no?" Oh, the French—they do know how to charm a woman. □

HAIR STORY *Jacques Dessange catered to the posh and pampered.*



From far left: The scene when Jacques Dessange opened his salon in 1954; a young Jacques; the first international salon, which opened in Tunisia in 1962; an image from the early days, almost 60 years ago, of the salon's relationship with the Cannes Film Festival



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TRIPLE PLAY

Research from McMaster University in Hamilton, Ont., found that only 40 percent of Canadians turn to exercise as a means of stress release. These three new workout-gear collaborations might help perk up those stats.

RIHANNA X PUMA
As the brand's new women's creative director, the ultimate bad gal is sure to bring scores of edgy and fearless garb to the collection.

ADIDAS X STELLA MCCARTNEY
McCartney's signature minimalism blends bright whites with candy-coloured hues (above). Think flattering piping and crisp perforation.

SWEATY BETTY X RICHARD NICOLL
A 10-piece collection that feels futuristically feminine: Sweet pastels and body-con tanks meet opalescent, high-shine fabrics.

BODY NEWS

NUCLEAR CALM

Tell stress to get bent with these refreshing ideas.

BY KATHERINE FLEMMING



PATCHWORK

Natural Patches of Vermont ($7.50 each, at naturalpatchesofvermont.com), at the Sense Spa at Rosewood San Miguel de Allende in Mexico, attempt to prolong that post-treatment sensation. These small pieces of adhesive cloth are saturated with essential oils and extra-virgin olive oil; spa therapists usually apply them to the body and face at the beginning of a treatment. Spa director Paulina Mercader says that the patches send positive impulses to the brain as you inhale them, and their effect can last for up to 24 hours. They can be tailored to your needs, such as camomile for headaches and tension or lavender for repose.



ELLE ♥ LOVES



Teatox Nightly Zen Tea ($19, theteatoxcompany.com), a cinnamony-minty commixture of organic valerian, oat straw, passion flower and skullcap flower to help relax the central nervous system while alleviating anxious thoughts of impending doom. We find it relaxes us almost as much as meditating on Charlie Hunnam.

WHAT Spa Grande at the Grand Wailea. **WHERE** This haven in Maui, Hawaii, is the state's largest, with 40 luxury treatment rooms. The laundry list of therapies leaves no (hot) stone unturned. **HIGHLIGHT** Arrive an hour pre-treatment to hit the Termé Hydrotherapy Circuit. It's a maze of Swiss-jet showers, plunge pools and sea-salt tubs. **RELAXATION VERDICT** Ridiculously Zen. You'll likely fall asleep thanks to hypnotizing ukulele tunes and your therapist's rhythmic hand strokes. **MUST-DO** The new treatments, like the Honey Macadamia Nut Immunity Booster ($332), are so fragrant you'll leave smelling like fresh-baked cookies. Doze in a volcanic-ash cocoon post-treatment. **CHANIZE THORPE**

GETTY IMAGES (TEA)

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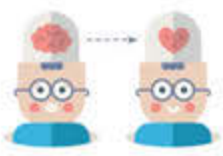
COMFORT IN CHAOS

Learn to embrace a multitude of thoughts and feelings.

BY ANDY PUDDICOMBE









Puddicombe is the co-creator of the meditation app Headspace. It's available at headspace.com.

When most people think about meditation, they imagine a clear, blank mind. That's definitely what I thought it was. Before I quit university in England to spend 10 years in various parts of Asia studying meditation to become a Buddhist monk, I imagined that I would be sitting on a mountaintop feeling totally blissed out—that I would have no thoughts at all for many years. The reality is that it's the nature of the mind to think, and we can't control it. If we were able to control the brain and turn off our thoughts, there'd be no need for meditation. It doesn't matter how hard you try to clear your mind, either. In fact, if you have an anxious thought, trying to clear it often makes you feel more anxious, which can be frustrating. And then you're not just anxious—you're also angry. And once you're anxious and angry, there's a good chance it's going to make you sad. This happens all day, every day, in our minds. It may go on for just a few minutes, it may go on for the whole day or it may go on for weeks at a time.

Meditation is not about turning off thoughts or searching for a clearing; it's about stepping back. It's a way to help you let the thoughts pass by, like traffic on a busy street; what's important is not getting caught up or stopped by those thoughts. So when a feeling or thought comes up, that's okay. It comes, it goes and it doesn't bother you—that's the real sweet spot. You can't operate in life with a clear mind all the time. Anyone can have peace of mind when they're feeling calm and clear; meditation is about attaining a peaceful mind when it's clouded with thoughts. Learning to be at ease even when the mind is busy is amazing. What tends to happen is this: The more you learn the behaviour of stepping back, the more the thoughts start to slow down naturally—and from there you'll find a little bit of calm. When you're calm, you get a bit of clarity, and clarity leads to more contentment. At that point, there's usually more space in your mind. And when you're less caught up in your own stuff, there's more room for compassion for others. ☐

ELLE CANADA
Check out page 114 to learn how meditation can help you thrive in the boardroom.

MIND TIME

How to meditate when you feel ready to implode. Start with 10 minutes a day and work your way up to 30 minutes if you can.

1. Find a quiet space where you can relax, and sit on a chair.

2. Defocus your eyes by gazing softly into the middle distance.

3. Observe your posture and notice the sensations of your body on the chair. Acknowledge your senses. Close your eyes.

4. Turn your mind inward and mentally scan your body, from head to toe, observing any tension or discomfort.

5. Bring your attention to your breathing, but don't make any effort to change it. Observe the rising and falling sensation that it creates in your body.

6. You might find yourself inundated with thoughts and plans or feel calm and focused. Whatever happens is completely fine.

7. Become aware once more of the physical feelings: the chair beneath you, where your feet make contact with the floor, your arms, your hands resting in your lap. Notice anything you can hear, smell, taste or feel.

8. When you are ready, slowly open your eyes.

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SURF & TURF

The next-generation sunscreen that's making a splash. BY VANESSA CRAFT

I know that the sun, much like a Real Housewives marathon, may initially feel really fun to be around but ultimately is so very bad for your health.

Here's how you'll spot me on the Bahamian beach: Look for the woman under an oversized sun umbrella who's wearing a wide-brimmed opaque floppy hat and applying sunscreen every hour on the hour. As a beauty editor who has spent years interviewing dermatologists and skin-care experts, I know that the sun, much like a Real Housewives marathon, may initially feel really fun to be around but ultimately is so very bad for your health.

I'm in the Bahamas to road-test Shiseido's new WetForce Ultimate Sun Protection Lotion, which takes sunscreen's mortal enemies—water and sweat—and uses them to boost UV protection. While I watch a cute couple laugh and splash around in the salty ocean waves, I consider the many conversations I have had with dermatologists about staying safe in the sun. They often use serious-sounding terms like "efficacy" (how well a product works) and "compliance" (is the consumer using the product as directed? Is he or she applying it as frequently as recommended?) because that's the tricky thing: You can build the perfect sunscreen, but if people don't apply the proper amount or reapply regularly and frequently (especially after swimming or a sweat-inducing activity), the product won't be as effective as when it was created in the lab.

This is why Shiseido, which claims that WetForce's UV protection becomes stronger the wetter it gets, might be a real game changer in the realm of sun protection. But how does it work? Sitting in the shade of my sun lounger, I shoot off an email to Satoshi Yamaki, a research scientist at Shiseido, to find out. Yamaki spearheaded the new technology and explains that, traditionally, sunscreens become less effective when wet because of two mechanisms. The most obvious: Water simply rinses away the protective "film" of sunscreen on the skin. But even if the film has a high enough repellency level to fight being washed away, "it doesn't have the ability to keep its structure, so the state of [the film] becomes rough," explains Yamaki. This reduction in uniformity is what diminishes UV protection—and it's probably why so many of the guys I see playing beach volleyball after their afternoon swim have red shoulders.



LAYER PLAYER

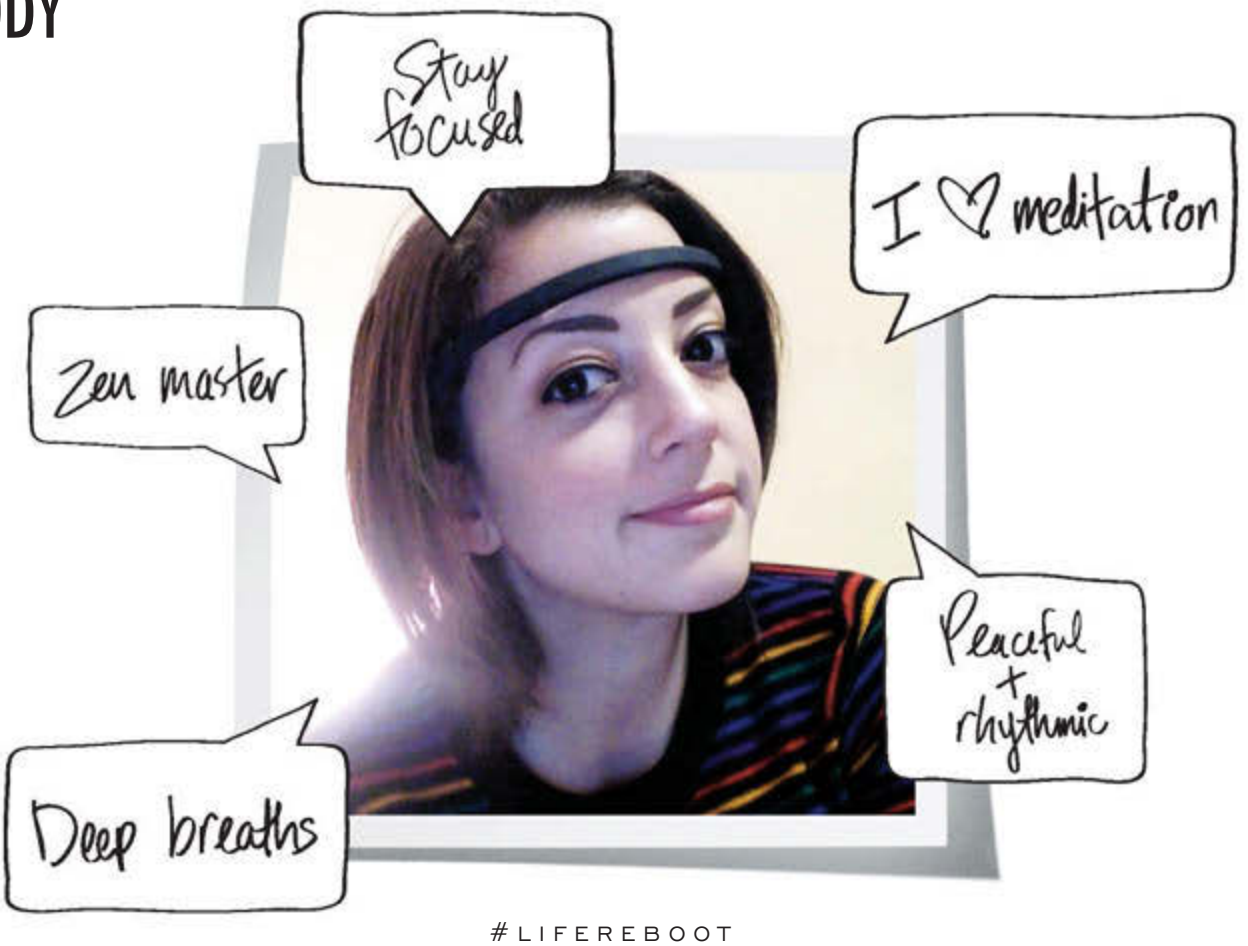
Up your sun-protection prowess with these creamy–but not sticky–sunscreens; their antioxidants will give you an anti-aging advantage. Shiseido WetForce Ultimate Sun Protection Lotion SPF 50+ ($49) and Shiseido WetForce Ultimate Sun Protection Cream SPF 50+ ($48) contain anti-aging ingredients from South Asia, such as *Syzygium jamobos* leaf, an anti-inflammatory, and the skin conditioner *Saxifraga sarmentosa*, a perennial flower used in Japanese herbal medicine. For details, see Shopping Guide.

Yamaki says that the idea for this next-generation sunscreen came after he delved into research that centred around South Asia's hot and humid environment and—here's a surprise—ionic hairstyling technology. Hair-care companies are currently fixated on the way that positive and negative ionic charges work together to make hair look smoother.

WetForce uses what is called an "ionic mineral sensor," which forms a film with high water repellency by attracting minerals found in the water or sweat. "This results in a sunscreen that is more uniform and smoother later than when it is first applied," says Yamaki. The more even the surface the better protected the skin is.

Armed with this knowledge, I join the festivities and spend a very active last day in the Caribbean sun. I play a rigorous game of tennis, go for a dip in the deep-turquoise sea and take several walks in the sunshine back and forth to the bar. I've got my liquid courage.

EVAAN KHERAJ (MODEL); GEOFFREY ROSS (PRODUCTS)



#LIFEREBOOT

SLOW MOTION

Stephanie Gilman trains her brain to chill.

I'm lying in bed, listening to the calming sounds of rippling water, when a thought pops into my head: The fridge is empty. I have to buy groceries. What should I make for dinner this week? One thought leads to another, and I notice that the quiet nature sounds have transformed into strong winds and crashing waves. I stop my rambling thoughts in their tracks and focus on my breathing. As I count the breaths (one in…two out…three in…), the wind is replaced by the soothing stream and then, in the distance, the soft sound of birds chirping happily, signalling that the storm has, indeed, passed.

This sequence of events was the result of the varying levels of activity in my brain. No, I have not spontaneously developed magical powers. (How great would that be, though?) My ability to control nature sounds comes from my newest fashion accessory: a sleek headband that goes by the name of "Muse."

Muse is a brain-sensing headband from Toronto-based tech company Interaxon that can help train the mind to be more calm and focused and less stressed. It senses the pulses of electricity that bounce between the 100 billion neurons in the human brain. When one's mind is active, there's a lot of bouncing going on. The goal is to slow things down to a peaceful, rhythmic hop. This claim sounded pretty good to me, as I've been looking for different ways to lower stress in my life and halt the numerous anxious thoughts floating around in my mind.

After putting on the headband, I start the "Calm" app, which guides me through a simple meditation exercise. Immediately I start to get real-time feedback on how I'm doing. As thoughts enter my mind and begin to run amok, the winds pick up, signalling me to come back into the moment and calm my mind. When my mind is very calm, I'm rewarded with more points and the sound of birds tweeting. Essentially, it's meditation as a game. But does it work?

I spent a month with Muse, using it in the evenings to help relax and clear the thoughts of the day. My first session with Muse told me I was 27-percent calm—pretty pitiful and not really where I want to be in my life right now. But within a few days I had achieved a "score" of▷

COURTESY STEPHANIE GILMAN

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The Muse measures electrical impulses in your brain and provides instant feedback when it's time to chill ($299, choose muse.com). **Enter to win** a Muse by sharing your #lifereboot story at ELLECanada.com/lifereboot.

74-percent calm and received 15 "bonus birds" as a reward for my relaxed mental state. "This meditation stuff isn't so hard," I thought. "I've already mastered it; I am pretty much Buddha."

Oh, how quickly the mighty fall.

My moment as a Muse champion did not last long. My sessions were all over the place, with several under 50 percent. Occasionally I'd spike back up to a high level of calm, but it rarely lasted more than a day. Once, I even scored a pathetic 1 percent. A master of Zen I was not.

Although I didn't necessarily improve all that much at calming my mind, I did keep at it, making sure that I took at least a few minutes out of each day to sit, breathe and meditate. Apart from sporadically achieving a decent score, I wasn't so sure the routine was having any major effect on my stress levels or my ability to control them…until a few weeks later, when I began to notice worsening pain around my ribs.

When you've had cancer, any new pain can be cause for alarm. It's one of the (many) unfortunate aftereffects I'm now stuck dealing with. So when I started to feel some muscular and bone pain on the side where my cancer once lived, my thoughts immediately spiralled down a familiar dark and frantic path. What if the cancer is in my bones? How long will I have left to live? How will I tell my family? What if I die before the series finale of *The Americans* and never know how it ends?

Tears started to burn my eyes as I ruminated about the many awful things that might still happen to me and the anger I felt at having to live with those types of possibilities. I cursed myself for not renewing the prescription for anxiety medication that was given to me when I was first diagnosed. I was left with only one option: to attempt to calm my mind and halt the negative thoughts. I sat down, closed my eyes and began counting my breaths, in and out, in and out, until my heart stopped racing and I started to feel at ease. My body relaxed, and I felt the panic dissipating. The exercise appeared to actually be working, as it slowly but surely brought me down from the ledge I had created for myself. I didn't need to hear the wind subside or the birds chirping to know that I had managed to succeed at something that once seemed impossible.

A few days later, I had a bone scan. I learned that everything was fine, which was a huge relief. That said, I know that I will never be cured of my anxiety and that these moments of panic are something I will likely have to deal with for the rest of my life. That's what it is to live a life filled with uncertainty. It's not easy, but I know now that I am moving in the right direction and learning to cope with the many question marks and what-ifs that surround me. I haven't mastered it yet. But if I focus and listen very closely, I can almost hear that babbling brook and the sweet sound of singing birds. □

ELLE CANADA

Check out Stephanie's other challenges at **ELLECanada.com/lifereboot**.

CHALLENGE #8 Next month, I'll be looking at how social media affects my life and what happens when I go cold turkey. Can I survive without the likes and retweets and constant connection? Honestly, I'm not sure....

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CANADA ELLE

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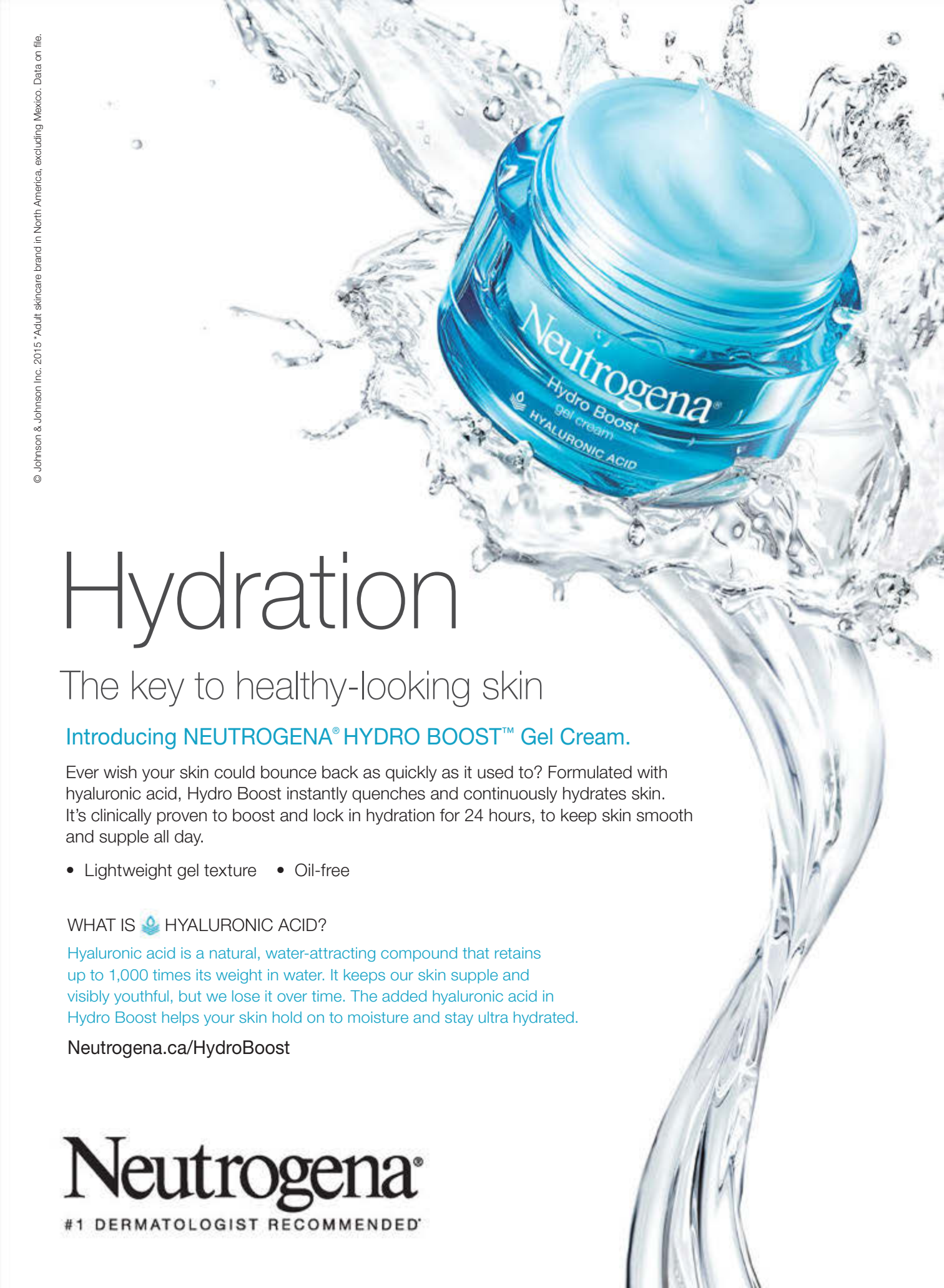


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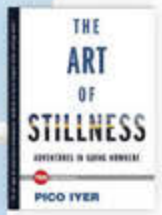
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ZEN FLIGHT

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READING JOURNEY Pico Iyer's *The Art of Stillness: Adventures in Going Nowhere* is based on a TED Talk by the same name that he gave last summer; Five-Mile Beach on Koh Rong Island (left), near Song Saa Private Island in Cambodia (page 174), is the perfect place to read the short tome, which can easily be done in one sitting.

EDITOR'S POV The next time you fly, travel writer Pico Iyer recommends that you try what Zen monk Matthieu Ricard calls "a retreat in the sky." Iyer turns off the seat screen and lets his mind "go foraging—or lie down—like a dog on a wide, empty beach." If he thinks of something important, he just jots it down in a notebook. He was inspired to do this after observing a young woman, a seatmate, sit silently through a 12-hour flight. It was her way of de-stressing and detaching from her hectic job ahead of a much-needed vacay. He explains that she wanted to land "in as clear a state as possible, ready to enjoy her days of rest." Sounds like a true moment of Zen. **CHRISTINA REYNOLDS**

GETTY IMAGES



ISLANDS OF CHANGE

A private-island resort in Cambodia balances luxury with generosity. BY CHRISTINA REYNOLDS



GOOD NEIGHBOURS Song Saa Private Island (top) works with the nearby fishing village of Prek Svay (above) through its non-profit Song Saa Foundation. "We talk to locals and ask 'What do you need?'" says Ben Thorne, the foundation's project director. So far, villagers have received help setting up a waste-reclamation system; assistance accessing much-needed medical care through International Medical Relief, which includes a vitamin distribution program; as well as educational guidance, seeds and supplies to plant dozens of vegetable gardens in an effort to improve nutrition and diversify an economy where 80 percent of residents rely on fishing to get by.

Leave it to a former "organic stylist"—who once created exotic natural backdrops for fashion photo shoots—to transform a rundown and overgrown fishermen's outpost into a rustic-luxe private resort with its own charitable foundation and Cambodia's first marine reserve.

Yet nine years ago, even the idea wasn't in the Hunters'—Melita, the stylist, and Rory, a former advertising executive—wildest dreams. At the time, the Australian-expat couple had been living in Cambodia for several years. While they were renovating and renting out French Colonial houses, they heard a rumour about an area off the coast of Sihanoukville, the country's main port town, that supposedly had incredible white beaches—and not many foreigners or tourists. Determined to see it for themselves, they hired a fishing boat and set out on a two-week excursion to check out Koh Rong, Cambodia's second-largest island—with few inhabitants and just four modest villages—as well as some surrounding islets.

On their first day out, the Hunters landed at a set of small islets that were being used as a fishing outpost. "It wasn't beautiful by any means," says Melita. But the moment they stepped onto the ▷

CHRISTINA REYNOLDS (PREK SVAY VILLAGE)



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BEAUTIFUL RECYCLING The deck at Song Saa's spa (top) is crafted from the reclaimed wood of old fishing boats. The Hunters went to local fishing villages and paid the communities for the right to remove their old, rotting boats—which not only helped clean up the shorelines but also provided easy access to (already wonderfully coloured) building materials in a remote region.

footprint-free powdery-white-sand beach, "it was a feeling of euphoria," she says. That same day, a man named Vut, who was the head of the 65-person fishing village, came over to talk and asked, "Would you like to buy my islands?"

The couple was a bit taken aback by the offer, "but we said yes immediately," says Melita, and they made a deal to buy the islets from the villagers. The Hunters moved to the bigger of the two islands to camp out and begin cleaning up decades worth of fishing nets—with the dream of one day opening a resort. They hired the former villagers as well as locals from Prek Svay on Koh Rong, just a five-minute boat ride away. Fast-forward through six years of planning, building and personal setbacks—during this time, Melita was diagnosed with (and overcame) cancer—and the twin-island resort, now called Song Saa, which is Khmer for "the sweethearts," finally opened in 2012.

Just 27 immaculate rustic-modern villas, each with its own plunge pool, are carefully tucked into the lush vegetation on the main island, so it never feels crowded. Dinners are kept private at carefully spaced locations—one might be invited to a candlelit Kampot-pepper-infused seafood spread on the beach or a table set up in the shallow end of the main pool—where local Khmer dishes are served while you soak your feet. Private guided activities are also popular, such as kayak trips up a mangrove-lined river on Koh Rong and snorkelling excursions around man-made reefs that were added to restore and protect the marine life. The Hunters worked to have the archipelago area declared the country's first marine reserve. The resort's non-profit Song Saa Foundation is now working to have it upgraded to a marine-protected area. The Hunters have taken special care to not only protect the environment but also help its local people, who are still facing many challenges following decades of war. Close to 20 percent of the resort's staff are from Prek Svay, and the foundation is working closely with local leaders to provide a variety of support to the community. "We opened this resort with a belief and hope that Cambodia would sort itself out," says Rory. "We want people to see that there is more to this country than the Khmer Rouge and Angkor Wat." ▷

SPA STYLE *Song Saa's three must-try treatments.*

SPACE WALK I was a little intimidated to try underwater meditation. At night. In the ocean. Wearing a weight belt. And using a scuba breathing apparatus that I'd never tried before. Thankfully, the resort's yoga teacher prepped me with a guided breathing exercise to help slow my heart rate before I went under. With the reassurance that I would only be in shallow water just metres from shore and have a dive master carefully watching over me, I let myself sink to the sandy bottom where I began to breathe in (one, two, three, four) and out (one, two, three, four). I let my arms and legs float freely, and because the water was virtually the same temperature as my skin, I could hardly sense them at all. It felt like I was drifting in space. As I swirled the water with my arms, what looked like galaxies of tiny sparkly stars began to appear—phosphorescent plankton that came from a nearby mangrove forest. To top it off, I could also see the almost-full moon glowing above the water's surface. Though I couldn't see the real stars, I knew they were out there. Can an earthbound person really sense what it's like to float in space? I certainly felt like I was light years away.



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HOW TO FOLD A LOTUS FLOWER

Cambodia's lotus flowers totally captivated me. Because they rise untarnished from the muddy pond waters where they grow, they are Buddhist symbols of purity. But they are even more beautiful when their strong petals are carefully pulled back and folded–like pieces of organic origami–into a variety of intricate designs. I delighted in each of the different folded arrangements I came across–see a slide show of my favourites at **ELLECanada.com/travel**.

Here's how to do a basic fold: 1. Gently loosen the outermost petal and pinch-fold it in half. 2. Form a triangle by folding the petal in on itself twice. 3. Carefully tuck in the end. 4. Working in a circular motion, continue to fold petals back until you get as close to the centre as you like. Folded flowers will keep fresh for several days before they begin to brown.



Bayon temple (right) is one of the most iconic sites at Angkor Wat. Here, the 37 still-standing towers each feature up to four large carved faces–making for a lot of serene smiles to size up.



MUST-SEE

You can't go to Cambodia and not see Angkor Wat.

Angkor Wat is one of the largest and most unusual temple complexes in the world–and it's even more incredible to take in during (and after) an afternoon rainstorm. As I explored the temple of Ta Prohm, just one example of the Khmer architecture that spreads out over 400 square kilometres, the hot, heavy and humid skies burst almost instantaneously with big, warm raindrops. Other visitors quickly disappeared beneath passageways and huddled below some of the gigantic silk-cotton trees that have famously grown into (and in many cases taken over) the sandstone walls that date back to the 12th century. When the rain started, I happened to be standing at one of the most famous tree-wall fusion points (a spot featured prominently in *Lara Croft: Tomb Raider*), and I suddenly had it almost all to myself–which was especially lucky since I visited on the last day of a busy two-week-long holy festival. As the rain shower sent sweet drops down my back and shoulders, I soaked in the fusion of man- and nature-made magnificence (like a carved rock face perfectly surrounded by a curving tree trunk). As quickly as it came, the rain was gone. Distinct sunrays began to split the clouds and light up the water-soaked ruins, bringing out the intensity of the green mosses that coat many of the crumbling stones and lending an extra sense of peace to a site that has been a continuous place of worship for hundreds of years.

STAY Originally built in the 1930s, the Raffles Grand Hotel d'Ankor in Siem Reap is just a 10-minute drive from the temple. Book one of the pool villas–each has a private patio that opens onto a lush courtyard with an expansive swimming pool. Take an evening dip and inhale the scent of the surrounding frangipani trees. ☐



CHRISTINA REYNOLDS (LOTUS-FLOWER BUDS)



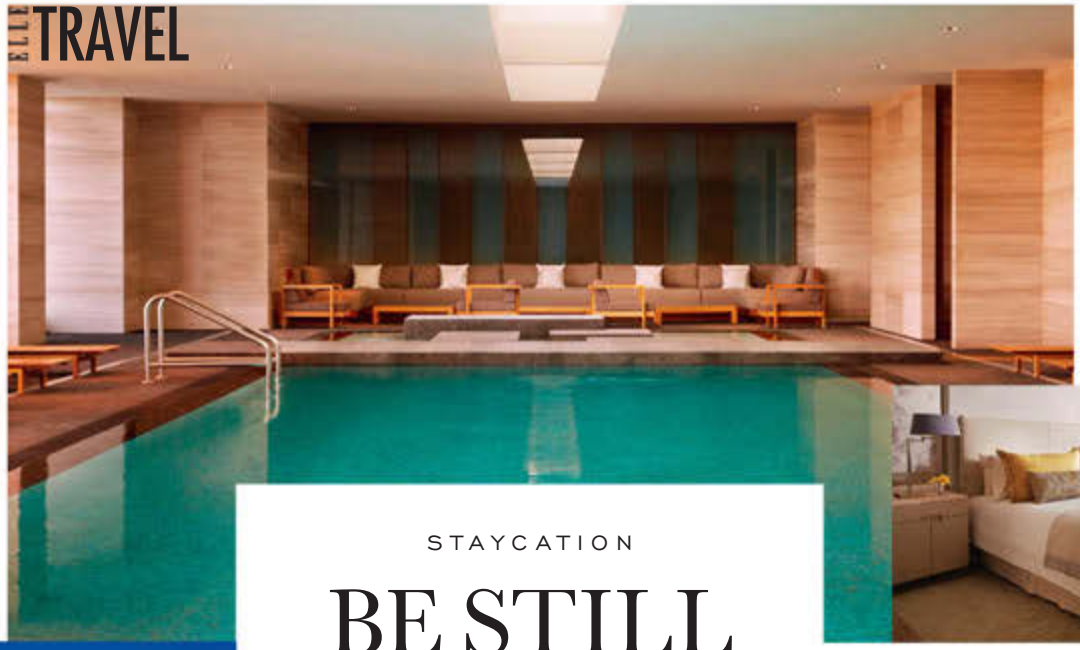
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STAYCATION

BE STILL

There are benefits to staying where you are.

I'm game to travel and explore just about anywhere—and I'm fortunate that I get to do so for my job. But, recently, I decided to take the advice Pico Iyer offers up in his book *The Art of Stillness: Adventures in Going Nowhere*...and do just that. He advocates periodically taking what he calls a "secular Sabbath"—a time out from not only our daily lives but also our high-octane travel adventures—as a way to revitalize and more fully appreciate all of life's journeys. With that in mind, I arrived at the Four Seasons Hotel Toronto—which is just a 10-minute cab ride from my house—for my own little retreat: a weekend stay to try the property's new "Detox Box" experience. I set aside my to-do list, put my phone on "mute" and didn't pack much beyond pyjamas and Iyer's book.

I felt stillness descend upon me the moment I entered my suite. Sunlight, softened by sheer curtains, streamed into the room, making the minimalist muted-yellow decor feel both bright and calming. Immediately, I noticed that the mini-bar had been emptied of the regular temptations and was instead stocked with a supply of cold-pressed juices from Greenhouse Juice Co. The only things on my agenda were an "energizing" massage at the spa and two room-service deliveries: a fresh salad for dinner and a lemon-grass- and ginger-infused tea before bed. I spent my day nestled in the couch or curled up on the bed thinking, reading, dozing a bit and not paying particular attention to the time. The break helped me refocus my priorities and rediscover the value of letting my mind wander—and let me reflect on how grateful I am for everything I have.

In the book, Iyer writes about singer-songwriter Leonard Cohen, who has famously spent significant portions of the past 40 years studying Zen meditation. He credits Cohen with describing the act of sitting still as "going nowhere." While he has travelled the world extensively, Cohen told Iyer that his greatest journeys are inner ones. I'm certainly up for more of my own inner trips. **CHRISTINA REYNOLDS**



ANOTHER SWEET PERK TO GOING NOWHERE

Cherry blossoms are one of spring's simple pleasures. Each deep breath you take while in the company of the soft pink petals can be a calming moment of olfactory meditation. But because the trees only bloom during a short window every April or May, travelling to see them can be a bit tricky. How disappointing would it be to go all the way to, say, Japan to experience them in their full glory and then miss their peak bloom by just a few days? But if you stay close to home instead and visit places like Vancouver's VanDusen Botanical Garden and Toronto's High Park, which have significant cherry-blossom gardens, that ephemeral bloom becomes much easier to enjoy. The only trick is finding a quiet, crowd-free moment to take it all in. We recommend an early-morning weekday visit—think of 10 minutes beneath the branches as a mini-retreat from your workweek.

GETTY IMAGES (CHERRY BLOSSOMS)

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TRAVEL INSIDER

UNTIL THE RIBBON BREAKS

On the road with the next It Brit band.

"It's like a rickety, fairly chaotic train that somehow arrives on time," says Pete Lawrie-Winfield (before leaping out of his seat in a Toronto dressing room to frantically knock on wood). Lawrie-Winfield is talking about life on the road with Until the Ribbon Breaks, the self-described "genre: indefinable" band he fronts, alongside Elliot Wall on drums and James Gordon on synth. The U.K. natives just made the move to Los Angeles, although they're currently criss-crossing the globe—Berlin! Portland! Coachella!—promoting their new album, *A Lesson Unlearnt*. "If you added together all the miles we've travelled and directed them toward space," says Lawrie-Winfield, "we'd currently be circumnavigating Jupiter."

TOUR PLAYLIST

1. "Oh My Darling Don't Cry" by Run the Jewels. **2.** "Old Man" by Neil Young. **3.** "American Beauty" by Thomas Newman. **4.** "America" by Paul Simon. **5.** "Number on the Boards" by Pusha T.



BLACK BOOK: LOS ANGELES

Morning hangout Lawrie-Winfield: "Spring for Coffee. I always get a Gibraltar. It's short and strong, like Tom Cruise." Gordon: "There are invariably more dogs than customers there." **Fave clichéd L.A. place** Wall: "I love Santa Monica Beach, and I take every opportunity to get there." **Watering hole** Lawrie-Winfield: "Laurel Hardware is expensive and can be a bit pretentious and wanky, but I like the concept." **Intimate dining** Gordon: "Mignon in downtown L.A. seats about 16 people, and the whole menu is based on cheese, meat and really good wine." **Current phobsession** Wall: "Phonomenal in West Hollywood is the best." Gordon: "The one in Beverly Hills is really good: 90210pho."



ROAD DIARIES **Pit-stop purchases** Lawrie-Winfield: "Cigarettes, a lighter and some nuts to counter the lack of fruit and veg that a diet of backstage tortilla chips and dip provides." **On-the-road grooming** Gordon: "I use this lovely Tree Ranger beard oil. It smells like tea tree." **Midnight munchies** Gordon: "Driving from New York to Toronto last night, we tried to Yelp somewhere, but the only thing open was a Wendy's drive-through. We couldn't even sit to enjoy the environment!" **Family circus** Wall: "James is 'band mom.' He texts us to make sure we've got our passports. I have to make sure the equipment is packed just right. Pete is just messy as fuck." **Drive-time entertainment** Lawrie-Winfield: "I listen to podcasts—The Moth, NPR, anything soothing." Gordon: "I load up my iPad with, like, *The New Yorker*, but I end up dozing." Wall: "I just look." Gordon: "It's true. Basically you meditate for six hours."



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Suede shirt and denim jeans, AllSaints ($360 and $178, ca.allsaints.com); suede and rubber sneakers, Jimmy Choo ($1,367, at NET-A-PORTER.com)

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Prayer flags near Seralung Monastery in Tibet's Kailash region; Koerner Yeo; the peak of Mount Kailash, which has never been summited because it is considered sacred





TRAVEL MEMOIR

AROUND AND AROUND WE GO

Why Lara Koerner Yeo believes in pilgrimage.

My mother introduced me to the idea of pilgrimage when I was a child. I've been fascinated ever since. "Pilgrimage is a time to think through tough questions about how and why we are living our lives as we are," she used to say. Even though she had never gone on one, she felt it was something every person should consider. During summer weekends at Lake of Bays, Ont., we would sit on the dock and make plans to walk the Camino de Santiago, a well-trod pilgrimage across northern Spain. But when my mother died of a sudden stroke during one of those summers, just a few days before I turned 17, I tucked our travel books away.

Three years later, the summer after my first year of university, I spent a month walking hundreds of kilometres on the Camino trail with my brother and cousin. We arrived in Santiago de Compostela, the Camino's end, on a sweltering day in August 2008. I was both elated and dissatisfied with being done. By the end of a few celebratory days in Santiago, I realized that my pilgrimage wasn't over—that there was much more to it than just a path with a finite beginning and ending.

As a result of that trip, and in the wake of my mother's death, I became increasingly interested in Tibetan Buddhism; its tenets of compassion, mindfulness and open-heartedness made a lot of sense to me. I felt I could either languish in bitterness and anger at how trauma had reverberated through my family or I could turn to compassion and love. I read about the practice quite extensively—as did another one of my brothers—and I participated in Buddhist communities. But, to this day, I do not think of myself as an active practitioner of Buddhism.

By 2012, I was working on my master's in human rights and humanitarian action when a close friend, Augusta Thomson, called to ask if I would join her in filming a documentary about the pilgrimage community around Mount Kailash, a sacred peak in western Tibet, as part of her undergraduate dissertation in social anthropology. The opportunity seemed like a gift—one that would awaken me from the monotony of the classroom and, I hoped, deepen my understanding of pilgrimage.

On July 12, I arrived in Darchen, the settlement at the base of Mount Kailash, with Augusta, who would direct the film; Don Nelson, a fellow researcher and our primary videographer; and a small Tibetan crew. The mountain ▷

AUGUSTA THOMSON

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Thomson, surrounded by prayer flags and fellow pilgrims, filming at Mount Kailash's Drolma La Pass; a Bon pilgrim (below) prostrating along the route into the Zhong Chu river valley

is deeply venerated by Hindus, Jains, Bons and Buddhists; it is considered the centre of their cosmological universe and known as the "jewel of the snow" and "the navel of the world." Each year, thousands of pilgrims make the 52-kilometre circumambulation, or *kora*, as it's known in Tibetan, around the 6,638-metre peak—which has never been summited because of its spiritual significance.

We encountered three types of pilgrims at Mount Kailash: permanent locals who live and work in Darchen, who complete the *kora* sometimes but primarily remain in town; groups of permanent and semi-permanent nomadic Tibetan Buddhists and Bons who come to the mountain from nearby villages during the mild seasons for a couple of weeks and walk or prostrate along the route on a daily basis, waking at 3 a.m. to complete one *kora* by late afternoon; and other visitors, often foreigners, who tend to complete only one *kora* in two to three days. Our group ended up slowly circumambulating three times in 12 days so we could do interviews and film along the way.

We started our first *kora* on a sunny afternoon. From Darchen, we set out across the expansive dry plateau below Kailash's snow-capped dome. Walking clockwise, the direction that Buddhists and most other faiths take (only Bons walk counter-clockwise), we soon encountered heaps of colourful prayer flags and ceremonial scarves, or *katas*. We'd reached the first of four prostration points, called *chakstal gangs*, along the Buddhist route. At these locations, pilgrims stop, bring their hands to their chest in prayer, raise them to their forehead and then bow down to the ground and touch their hands and forehead on the path in front of them. The majority of pilgrims prostrate only at specific sites along their path, but some do so at every step—making for an intensely arduous, slow-going journey.



Unlike the jubilant group of Bon pilgrims we met at this first *chakstal gang*, we didn't prostrate. Instead, we smiled and raised our hands in greeting. We could feel their excitement as they finished their journey for the day, and I'm sure they could sense our first-day enthusiasm. Next, we continued into the Lha Chu valley, passing the Chuku monastery, tea huts, nomad camps, the sacred Tarboche flagpole and the second *chakstal gang*. Just before we reached the Driraphuk monastery, where pilgrims who complete the *kora* in two days generally camp, we met a family of Buddhist pilgrims from central Tibet—an elder matriarch, her children and one grandchild—who were prostrating every step of the route.

The dust that engulfed the matriarch couldn't distract my attention from her shock of dark hair, her bright, penetrating eyes and her deeply sincere voice. She took a break to speak with us through our team's Tibetan translator as her family slowly moved forward. She seemed completely exhausted by the physical exertion of her devotion, yet she praised the mountain and its powerful grace. (The foreheads of her children, like hers, were caked with a thick layer of dirt from their prostration bows—some even had broken skin and small patches of dried blood.)

She explained how her family had spent months preparing for this journey, how they all made their own prostration gear—they'd sewn rubber pads for their knees, lower arms and palms and cloth aprons for their torsos. "We hope to complete the *kora* in two weeks," she explained hopefully. I was deeply touched to be in her ▷

THE MEANING OF PILGRIMAGE

Pilgrimage has been a central tenet of myriad faiths for millenniums; many religions consider it an obligatory practice at some point in life. The most well known is the Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca, which attracts millions of believers a year. While pilgrimages are broadly recognized as having a beginning and an end, they can also be understood as a cyclical route with no defined start or finish. Some are as short as a few minutes—in Tibet, these are commonly done every day—or they can take several months.

LARA KOERNER YEO (A. THOMSON FILMING); AUGUSTA THOMSON (PROSTRATING PILGRIM)

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A Bon pilgrim smiles and bows her hands—which are in homemade prostration gear—as she takes a break along the trail; Koerner Yeo strings prayer flags in the Gobi Desert; a typical view along the Kailash *kora*



presence and watch her family perform their devotions. I had never witnessed anything like it before, and it gave me a new perspective on my comparatively easy journey.

The next major site was the *kora*'s traditional burial site, called Siwashtal. Here, most pilgrims leave prayer flags and *katas* alongside bundles containing clothing and belongings of their deceased relatives (which often include bits of the deceased's hair and teeth). The enormous mass of stuff overtakes the trail—it's an astonishing contrast to the otherwise desolate landscape along the path between sacred sites. At first, I felt some foreboding as we approached the site. During one of our circumambulations, we watched some pilgrims enact a ritualistic death: They lay on a slab of rock and gently rolled on their backs with their palms open toward the sky. It seemed so startling. I never contributed anything to the pile or enacted my own death, but today, I think of such things as gifts and signs of respect for the mountain, for pilgrims' own spiritual selves and for their ancestors.

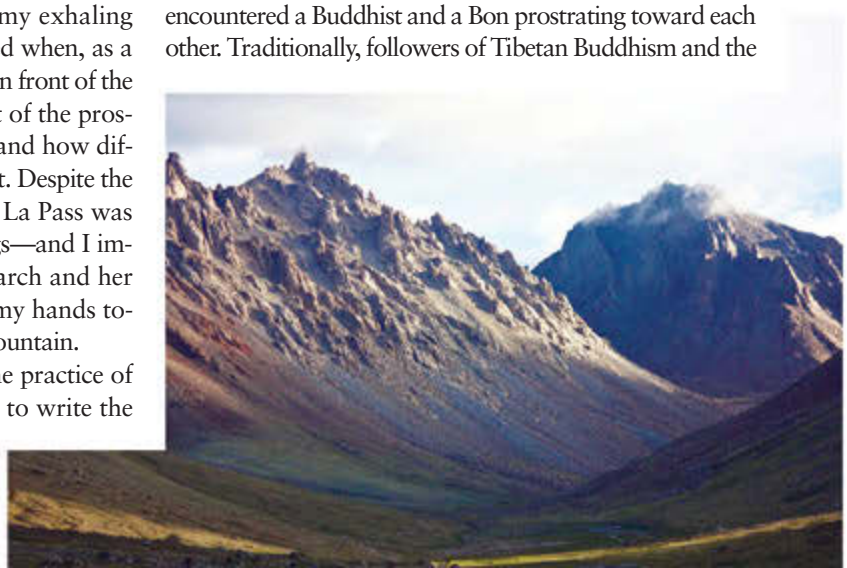
The apex of the pilgrimage is Drolma La Pass, which is about halfway around the route. At 5,636 metres, it's the highest point and considered by many to be the *kora*'s most sacred site. It's where one is symbolically reborn. The path up is the steepest part of the ascent, and I certainly felt the effects—I had terrible headaches from the altitude. With every heavy step, I would focus on my exhaling breath and the family mantra my father used when, as a teen, I first started hiking: "Just put one foot in front of the other." As I approached the pass, I thought of the prostrating Buddhist matriarch and her family and how difficult it would be for them to reach this point. Despite the exertion, every pilgrim we met on Drolma La Pass was overcome with emotion and full of greetings—and I imagined it would be the same for the matriarch and her family. It felt natural here for me to bring my hands together in prayer and recite mantras to the mountain.

At this high point, our team joined in the practice of leaving prayer flags on the pass. We chose to write the names of family and friends on individual prayer flags we'd carried with us. Then we strung them up to fly in the wind and act as a form of blessing. I took a photo of each of our flags and reflected, in that moment, on every name. When I came to my mom's name, I knew she was there, somewhere, approving of our journey.

In time, our little documentary team became a part of the collective pilgrim community. We interviewed devout Hindus in tour groups or with their gurus, a German man exposing his grandsons to mountain travel for the first time, a young Chinese pilgrim who quit his job to travel the country and who found Buddhism at Kailash, and a couple of jovial Bon men whom we encountered on the path three times. Everyone seemed centred on the common themes of reverence for the spiritual power of the mountain and openness toward their fellow pilgrims. I think Rolf van Buren, the German grandfather, characterized this best when he spoke to us of how, if you take the time to smile, raise your hands in greeting and say "*chin lab che*" (a Tibetan pilgrimage blessing) to passing pilgrims, you are always met with tremendous warmth. Although I never learned the exact translation, this is the sentiment. We were seeing first-hand how these small gestures—a smile, an extended hand, eye contact—are the pilgrims' communal language and the foundation of this unique community. It was a joy to partake in these practices day after day.

One night, while we were camping near Drolma La Pass, I set out to hike up to a glacier to have some time alone to reflect. Partway though a river crossing, I stopped on a rock to rethink how I could safely reach the other side. Before I could figure it out, a young nomad walked swiftly through the water toward me with a smile and open arms. I lunged toward him and he caught me in his embrace—I felt incredibly safe in the arms of this stranger. We raised our hands in prayer, bowed to each other and walked our separate ways. No words were exchanged.

During another circumambulation, Augusta and I witnessed a rare exchange between prostrating pilgrims—it's a scene that made it into our documentary. As we walked back to camp after filming at the fourth *chakstal gang*, we encountered a Buddhist and a Bon prostrating toward each other. Traditionally, followers of Tibetan Buddhism and the



Bon faith are rivals; they believe that ritualistic duels were fought between the religions' principle deities for control of the mountain. Knowing this as we looked at the narrow path, Augusta and I weren't sure what would happen. But right before the pilgrims would have collided, the Bon man halved his prostration to give the elderly Buddhist space to complete his bow. Both pilgrims then sat together on a large rock overlooking the path, talking and chuckling; they were two men, strangers, from oppositional faiths, brought together through humility and a shared practice.

I felt humbled to witness the scene. In fact, I often felt incredibly humbled by the kind demeanour of strangers on the *kora*. On the Camino, pilgrims were friendly and I felt very much a part of a community during my walk. But, comparing the experiences, I think my ability to casually speak with many other pilgrims in Spain diluted the power and importance of physical gestures that acknowledge and show respect for one another. On the *kora*, because the language barrier often prevented my group from speaking directly with fellow pilgrims, every gesture resonated.

Today, I'm studying law at the University of Toronto and working on projects related to women's and indigenous rights. In contrast to my time walking the *kora*, life is busy and hectic. People are abrupt with one another and often distracted by the minutiae of deadlines and to-do lists. It's not an environment where people appear to notice or understand the power of eye contact or a smile—gestures that come so naturally to pilgrims at Mount Kailash.

In the two years since I completed the *kora*, I've started a new tradition—a symbolic gesture of my own. I leave prayer flags wherever I happen to be each July. In 2013, I did so along the Dalai Lama temple circumambulation in Dharamsala, India; and this past July, I strung up flags on an Ovoo, a sacred cairn for offerings, in Mongolia's Gobi Desert. I do this because soon after I left Tibet, I learned that one of my cousins had been murdered just a few days after I had flown a flag for her on Kailash. In remembrance of her, and my mother, among others, I will do this every year.

Now, when I'm caught up in the tedium of school and feel like I'm losing perspective, I turn to the stories in our documentary, *Nine-Story Mountain* (ninestorymountain.com), which Augusta released last year. I also think of my mother and her own small but significant act of teaching me about the power of pilgrimage—how on those lazy summer days, we would talk about what it might mean to treat every day as a pilgrimage. I trust in this as I put one foot in front of the other each day. □

AUGUSTA THOMSON (PILGRIM & L. KOERNER YEO)

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To watch a clip from *Nine-Story Mountain*, go to **ELLECanada.com/video**.





A TALE OF TWO COMMUNITIES

The Sameness Project connects people from disparate walks of life in Dubai and beyond—one small gesture at a time. BY MARYAM SIDDIQI

During a work trip to Israel and Palestine in 2008, Dubai-based Lina Nahhas was sitting on a bus when she looked out the window at a passing car and had a startlingly simple realization. "It was just like my car at home—a woman driving in front and her daughter, practically the same age as mine, in the back. And it was like a slow-motion vision. I thought, 'If this bus blows up, or if there's any kind of danger around us, I would absolutely be shattered if this child gets hurt,'" she recalls. "That was the very first time a sameness moment, as I call it now, occurred to me. I was no longer just looking at the story from the outside; it became personal. If anybody gets hurt, it means that my child and I are hurt."

The Arab-Canadian calls that moment "an epiphany"—one that "rebooted [her] life." It was the trigger for stepping away from her successful career in market research and launching the Sameness Project, a Dubai-based organization that strives to break down barriers between people and promote empathy and humanity.

Dubai is a tough place in which to form a community. Rapidly growing and constantly developing, this desert city of about 2.2 million people, 75 percent of which are male, is often segregated into districts of shared labour accommodations and super-swish high-rises on man-made islands. Apartment rents that top $4,000 a month are not uncommon. In terms of cost of living, it is the most expensive city in the region, yet 19.5 percent of the residents of United Arab Emirates (UAE) live below the poverty line.

About 85 percent of the population are expats; while the term "expat" is often used to describe savvy globe-trotting professionals, in this case, almost all of that tally is made up of migrant workers, mostly from South and Southeast Asia. Aside from Arabic, the UAE's official language, these migrant workers speak more than a dozen other languages between them.

In recent years, tensions have arisen as human-rights activists and trade unions have been speaking up about the mistreatment of some migrant workers recruited to build many of the luxe megaprojects the UAE is best known ▷

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The Sameness Project staff, from left: Aimee-Rose Stephenson, Lina Nahhas, Jonny Kennaugh and Fiona Hepher





Participants in the Water for Workers program (above, right and below); a trainer works with a taxi driver as part of the We've Got Your Back program (far right)



"I think taxi drivers get such a bad rap in Dubai. I really enjoy getting to know them."

for. There have been accusations of squalid and cramped living conditions and cases in which employers have been accused of withholding workers' passports so they can't leave the country as well as reports of undocumented workers being denied access to government benefits. Some workers claim that they have been forced to work for free for months until they pay back their recruitment fees. There are also reports of "runaway maids," female foreign domestic workers—housekeepers, cooks and nannies who are employed in most middle- and upper-class Emirati households—who flee because they feel mistreated and overworked and sometimes haven't been paid.

In such a diverse place, with so many polarized living and working conditions, how do you bring people together? For Nahhas, you do it by recreating moments like the one she experienced while sitting on that bus. Drawing on her studies at the University of British Columbia, where she'd earned a degree in international relations, as well as years working on corporate social responsibility projects and personal research into empathy studies, Nahhas formed the Sameness Project in 2011 with Jonny Kennaugh and Aimee-Rose Stephenson. The couple, who had been living in New Zealand, came to visit Nahhas in Dubai in 2010 (Stephenson is aunt to Nahhas' daughter), and when the three got talking about the project, the couple decided to stay and help. The modus operandi: Start small and work on a community level.

"Since starting the project, I have been working exactly the opposite, navigating exactly the opposite, of how I did when I ran my company for 10 years," says Nahhas, 43, with a laugh. "It's all on gut." The very first outreach event—giving bottles of cold water to some of the city's outdoor workers—was a bit improvised. "There were 10 of us, and we met at a meeting point and then chose our drop-off places," she says. They handed out water to some workers on bikes travelling to the port. "I stopped for a guy on a bike who was going to deliver some food from a grocery store to a residential building," she explains. "Security guards, gardeners—there are all sorts of people working out in the heat who have become invisible to some of us," she adds, referring to society's more privileged members.

The effect of that drop-off was profound. Now called Water for Workers, the event is more organized and happens six times a year. From those initial 10 volunteers, the team today consists of Nahhas, Stephenson, Kennaugh and Canadian Fiona Hepher, along with a volunteer database of 500 to call on to distribute 5,000 bottles of water at a time. The program as a whole is now sponsored by PepsiCo, which provides the bottled water. It's a relationship that came into being thanks to Samar Habibi, a Pepsi employee who volunteered to greet ▷

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A pair of TOMS shoes that were decorated for the Sameness Project's Soles and Stories program

workers during one drop-off and, inspired, championed the cause to her employer.

"I often keep water in my car to hand out to labourers. But this was different because it focused on connection, not merely handing out water," explains Habibi. "Some people were unsure of what we were doing—sadly, it's not often that these two worlds collide in Dubai. Others wanted to grab the water and go. The magic happened when we paused and exchanged smiles—I said 'Thank you,' shook their hands and then handed them the water. Sometimes, we'd engage in a few-minute conversation. That's special."

Now, the Sameness Project has moved beyond water and runs eight or nine other initiatives a year—all with the goal of breaking down barriers. Hepher, who moved to Dubai from Vancouver in late 2010 and joined the organization in March 2013, manages the outreach events from start to finish. She's particularly fond of the We've Got Your Back program, which matches local taxi drivers with personal trainers to teach them stretches and exercises that will help prevent injury from 12-hour shifts in their cars. Some of the trainers, she says, earn up to 300 dirhams ($89) an hour to train clients but volunteer their time with these cabbies.

"I think taxi drivers get such a bad rap in Dubai. People have a really easy time criticizing them," she explains. "I really enjoy getting to know them on a more personal level...because, you know, you see the back of their heads when you get into a car. This is face to face; this is getting to see their family photographs and learn about what their day is like."

Soles and Stories is another Sameness program, one that has been replicated outside Dubai. Randa Abu Rayyan, a Palestinian-Canadian, and her domestic worker, Gemma Retamel, from the Philippines, participated in the event when it was run in Amman, Jordan, in February 2013. Retamel and a group of other domestic workers were sent pairs of TOMS shoes to decorate. The shoes were then put on display in a gallery—along with a story about the artists—and auctioned off. The workers received whatever money was raised on the night of the exhibition. "They were the stars of the show," says Abu Rayyan. The creative process and event inspired both Abu Rayyan and Retamel. "'I could be an artist,'" Abu Rayyan remembers Retamel saying to her. "She realized that she does have a talent other than cooking and cleaning. It encouraged her." As for Abu Rayyan, the experience gave her a renewed perspective as an employer. "You know, as a society, we expect a lot from our workers," she says. "It makes you realize that sometimes you take them for granted. I know they clean for us and they help us out, but they, too, have souls. And that's what really hit home. They have souls, just like us, and too often that's ignored."

The Sameness Project has seen positive effects of its work: Foremen at construction sites who were initially reluctant to give workers a break to receive the water now ask Nahhas' team when they'll be able to come next; the Dubai Chamber of Commerce called the team in to facilitate a networking session for corporate members and NGOs; and the group has fielded requests from cities in other countries for help in duplicating Sameness Project events. Right now, most of the volunteers are expats (the globe-trotting-professional kind) who find out about events through social media, but the team would like to get local Emiratis more involved. "The community here is still a bit of a struggle to get into," admits Hepher. "We're reaching out via social media to include them."

Still, going forward, one of the project's biggest challenges is financial sustainability. "Our organization's immediate goal is 'Let's stay afloat,'" says Nahhas. Until this year, she was funding the initiative herself (Kennaugh and Hepher are full-time paid staff, while Stephenson is part-time) with proceeds from the sale of her market-research company, but she is unable to do that indefinitely. She's seeking out corporate sponsorships (in addition to the Pepsi water donations) that are apolitical and stay true to the project's humanistic focus.

"One of the ultimate goals for me is to influence policy. We want to make enough positive noise so that we can go to the government and say 'Look what we've done. Let's look at policy. Look at some of the criteria that can be imposed on contractors, for example, to look after the workers. Look what can be done,'" she says. ❑

COURTESY THE SAMENESS PROJECT

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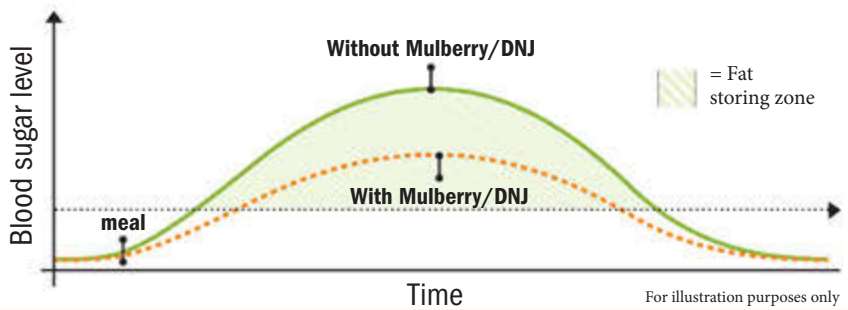
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ELLE HOROSCOPE

by Georgia Nicols

Aries
(MARCH 21 – APRIL 19)

This birthday might be one of the most powerful of your life. A Grand Trine now vibrates between your Sun in Aries, Jupiter in Leo and Saturn in Sagittarius–all the fire signs. This promotes romance, love affairs, vacations and creative opportunities as well as hints at a career peak in 2018. Plan a fun getaway for this year, and plan for your big success in three years.

Taurus
(APRIL 20 – MAY 20)

Although you are working behind the scenes and inclined to seek out solitude, with fiery Mars in your sign this month, you're ready for action. This is your chance to show the world what you can do. Fair Venus is also in your sign, promoting good times with friends. This is a great month to buy wardrobe treasures and take a vacation.

Gemini
(MAY 21 – JUNE 20)

A popular month for Gemini! Enjoy schmoozing, especially with younger people. (A secret love affair will take place for some.) This is an excellent month for serious discussions with partners and relatives, especially discussions that affect your goals. Your positive state of mind will encourage solutions to problems with others.

Cancer
(JUNE 21 – JULY 22)

This is a special month because it's the only time all year when the Sun is at the top of your chart, casting a flattering light on you. This is why everyone is impressed with you! Now is a good time to look for ways to boost your income or get a better job–they do exist. Before you know it, your career and financial situation will improve beautifully.

Leo
(JULY 23 – AUG. 22)

You want to travel now because you want to do anything that will expand your experience of your world. It's also a great time to explore opportunities in publishing, the media, medicine, higher education and the law. You make a great impression on people in authority, which suits you just fine because your ambition is aroused now. Go after what you want.

Virgo
(AUG. 23 – SEPT. 22)

Because you can benefit from the wealth and resources of others this month, keep your eyes open and be receptive to any offers or opportunities that may arise. This is the perfect time to ask for a loan or a mortgage or borrow something from someone. Support from others will help you with home repairs or ways to secure your home base.

Libra
(SEPT. 23 – OCT. 22)

This will be one of the most popular months of the year for you, so do get out and schmooze. Not only will you enjoy lighthearted, engaging conversation with friends and members of the general public but you'll also be invigorated by discussions that encourage the support of others, perhaps for a charitable cause. Remain flexible because changes are afoot.

Scorpio
(OCT. 23 – NOV. 21)

This is a fabulous time to make headway in your job and improve your reputation among your peers. This year you have unusual career opportunities, perhaps the best for years to come; this month, in particular, they are strong. Because of your professional success, you'll have to be patient with partners who might be jealous or demanding.

Sagittarius
(NOV. 22 – DEC. 21)

You love to see those telephone poles going by, and this is the perfect month to escape somewhere on a fun vacation. No question! If you can't travel, then take time to enjoy the arts and social engagements and parties close to home. You are blessed with romance, sports and playful times with children. This is a happy month for you.

Capricorn
(DEC. 22 – JAN. 19)

You can improve something to do with your home or family relationships this month. Others might lend money or offer support in some way that benefits you and your family. You might also see a haven of security down the road, which allows you to let go of what you presently have. Meanwhile, vacations, romance and fun times with children are promising.

Aquarius
(JAN. 20 – FEB. 18)

This is an active, busy, energetic time for you! Some of you want to express your views or enlighten others. Many of you will write and study more than usual or petition people. Meetings, gatherings and discussions will be significant. Meanwhile, this is a great time to redecorate your home. Your patience with family will encourage good times.

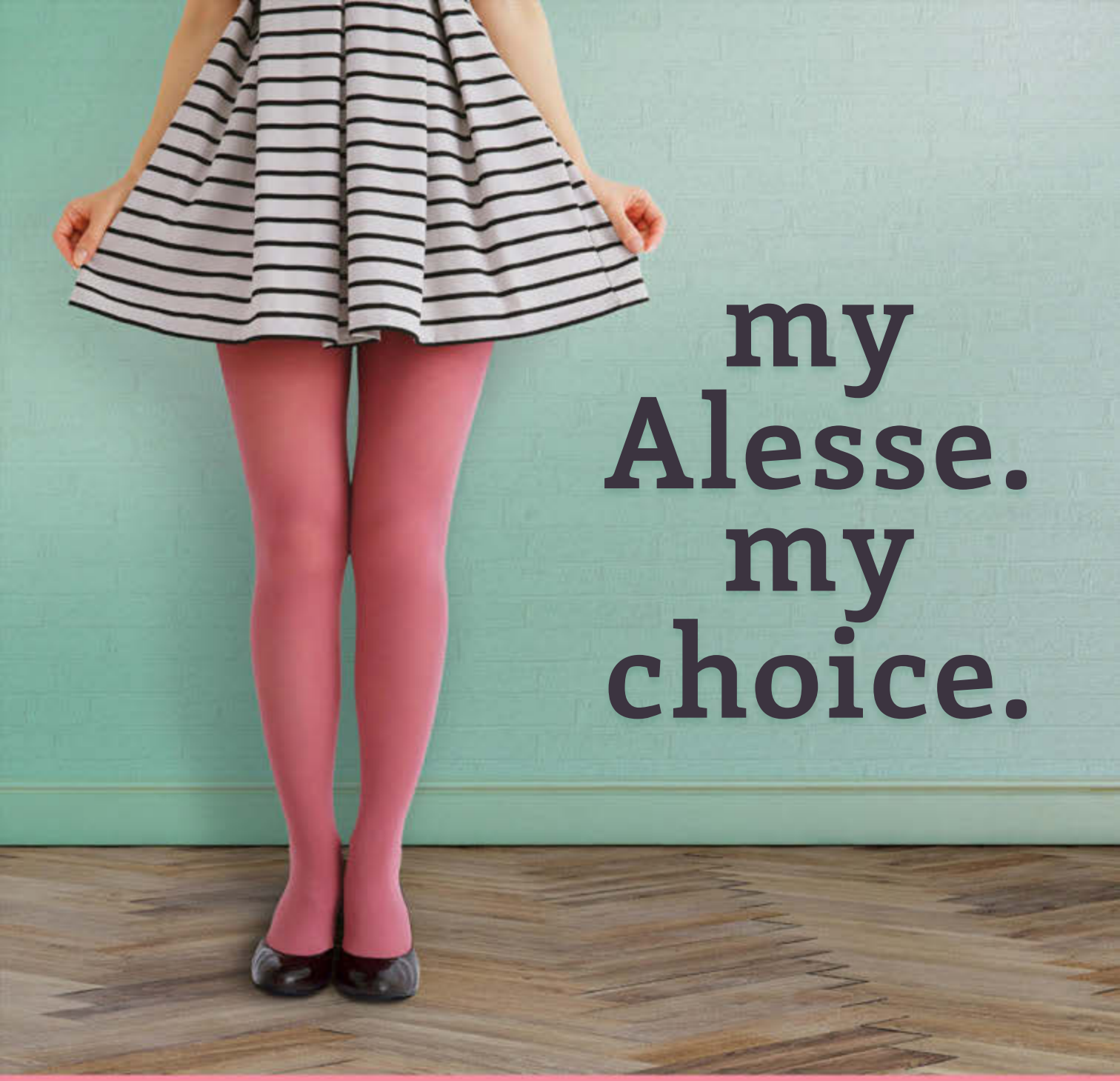
Pisces
(FEB. 19 – MARCH 20)

You have fabulous opportunities this month to boost your earnings, get a better job or enhance your reputation. It's all coming together for you now as you enter a time of harvest, which can also be a career peak. This is a strong month to make successful financial deals, especially job-related ones. It's a good time to sign contracts or deals. ☐

ILLUSTRATIONS BY EMILIE SIMPSON

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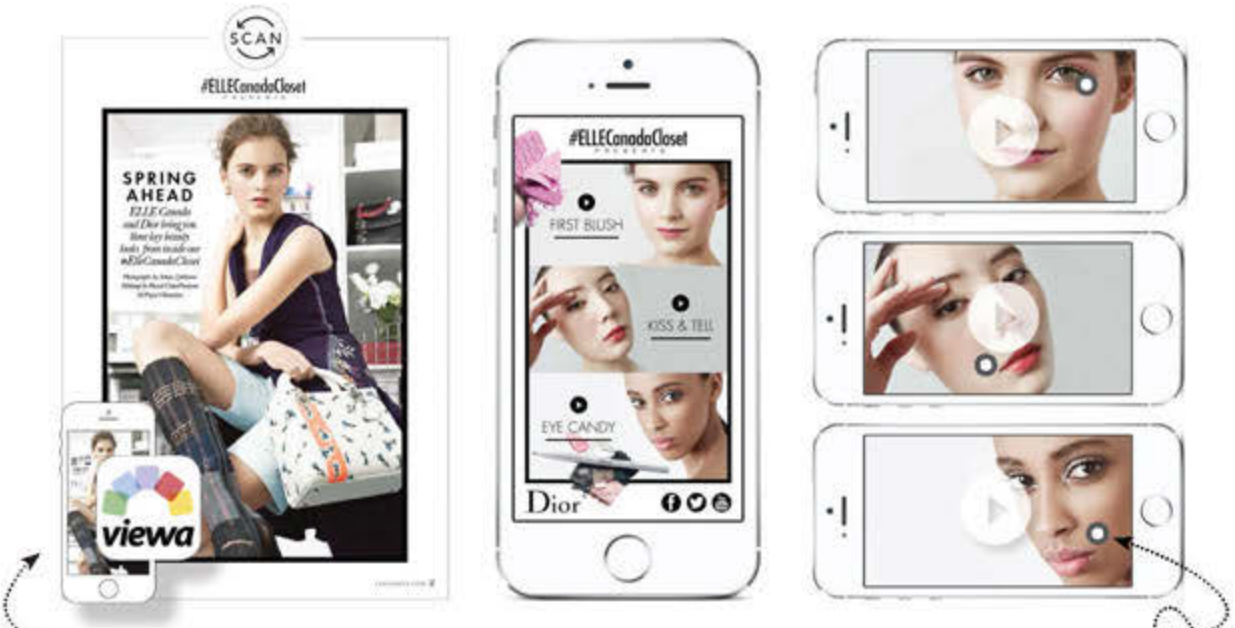


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STYLISH MOVE

This month, we're excited to launch a new style section called Fashion Moves. We wanted to bring you the inspiration of a fashion shoot and provide you with a list of items to suit every budget. Scan page 44 with your ***viewa*** app and then watch the videos that bring the looks to life. They're not shoppable this month, but they will be soon. Stay tuned....



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FOOTLOOSE

Bill Gaytten had a case of jungle fever when he designed the spring/summer 2015 collection for John Galliano. He even gave geisha-inspired geta footwear a tropical twist. Go back to nature with these elevated wedges ($2,295, johngalliano.com).

TEXT BY LISA GUIMOND; GEOFFREY ROSS; ILLUSTRATION BY ELENA VILTOVSKAIA

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